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FEBRUARY 1948

The American Mercury

THE COMMUNIST RECORD IN HOLLYWOOD Oliver Carlson
FACTS ABOUT RHEUMATIC FEVER Beatrice Borst
AMERICA'S TRAFFIC HEADACHES Sam Shulsky
MURDER AS A SEX PRACTICE Frank C. Waldrop



**VISHINSKY:
RUSSIAN WARMONGER**
by M. Vishniak P. 158

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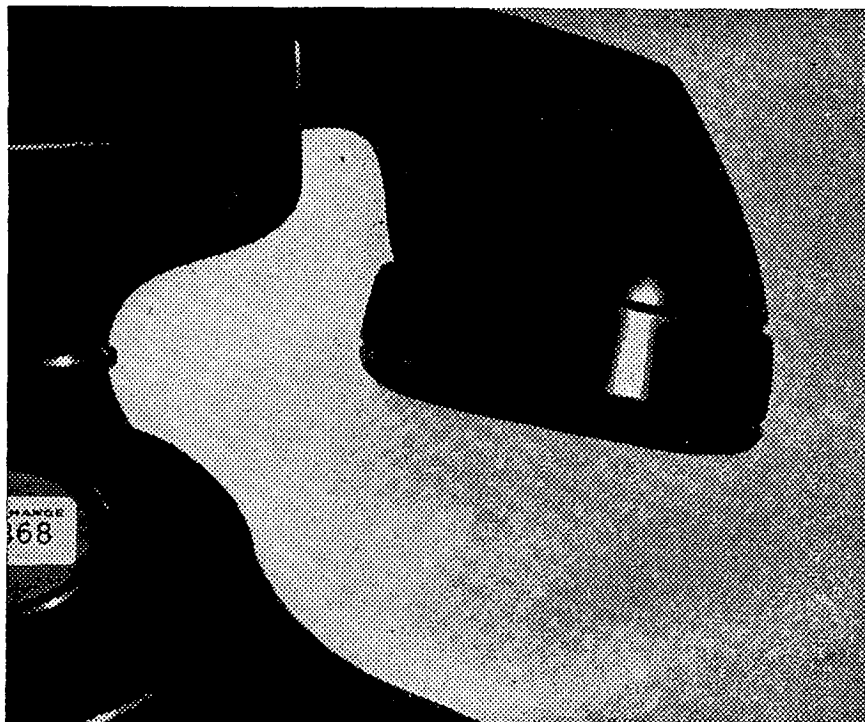
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The American Mercury for March

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JAMES V. FORRESTAL, by Donald B. Robinson. *A brilliant profile of the first Secretary of Defense in our history, filled with anecdotes that have never before appeared in print.*

WANTED: A NEW DEAL IN DIVORCE, by Dorothy Dunbar Bromley. *Because of our Federal system of government, the mess in the realm of divorce in this country is probably greater than almost anywhere else. Mrs. Bromley, Sunday women's page editor of the New York Herald Tribune, reviews the entire subject from the point of view of the unnecessary misery caused to all concerned and considers a number of the remedies suggested.*

PSYCHOSOMATIC ALLERGY, by Harry Swartz, M.D. *A thorough report — with many actual cases — of the latest researches in a field of medicine that has baffled investigators almost from the beginning of medical history. Dr. Swartz is an authority on the subject.*

THE TRUTH ABOUT LOBBIES, by Ruth Finney. *Despite recent legislation aimed to "bring lobbies out into the open," many of the dubious practices of these pressure groups remain, and Miss Finney, one of the top-notch Washington newspaper women, reveals some of these practices — giving names and actual instances.*

SOME GENERALS AND ADMIRALS WERE GAY, by Frank L. Kluckhohn. *There were many high officers in the Army and Navy, besides General Bennett Meyers, who did not always practice austerity during World War II, and Mr. Kluckhohn, feature news editor of the New York Times, who covered nearly all the war fronts, reveals some of the gaiety that went on. A most revealing study of one phase of the military life.*

There will also be a very humorous short story, "That Feller Oates," by August Derleth, and, of course, the usual departments: The Theatre, The Skeptics' Corner, The Library, The Soap Box, Down to Earth, The Open Forum, The Record Cabinet, and the Check List of New Books.

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HISTORY

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JUAREZ AND HIS MEXICO, *A Biographical History*, by Ralph Roeder. 2 volumes. \$10.00. *Viking*. This monumental work of scholarship is centered about Benito Juarez, the illiterate Indian shepherd who rose to be Mexico's most liberal president. But Mr. Roeder also ranges over the whole field of Mexican domestic and foreign politics through virtually the entire nineteenth century, and before he has finished he has thrown new illumination on such widely separated matters as the Louisiana Purchase and the downfall of Napoleon III in France. It should be noted that the author's purely literary skill is not inconsiderable.

WE, THE PEOPLE, *The Drama of America*, by Leo Huberman. Illustrated by Thomas Hart Benton. \$3.75. *Harper*. Mr. Huberman is a beligerent friend of the "common people," but in attempting to write their history in 350 pages he set himself an impossible task. The end result of his labors is an occasionally interesting volume

(Continued on page 245).

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The American Mercury

THE COMMUNIST RECORD IN HOLLYWOOD

BY

OLIVER CARLSON

TO MANY Americans the disclosure, late last fall, that Hollywood was a center of Communist activity came as a revelation. Even after the Hollywood hearings of the House Committee on Un-American Activities, it seemed hard for many to believe that the film industry could have been so much under the influence of foreign-directed totalitarians.

There should have been no surprise. The motion-picture industry, like every other industry capable of influencing the country's thinking, was a natural target for Communist penetration. The movies probably play a larger rôle in the development of

America's social *mores* than any other single cultural agency. Their potential propaganda value has always been clearly understood by the Communists.

And it is not as though the Thomas Committee uncovered something previously unknown. The record of Communist activities in Hollywood is a long one, dating back over many years, and involving some of the industry's biggest and most glamorous names. In the past ten years, the Hollywood-Los Angeles area has become the mouthpiece, heart and pocketbook of the American Communist Party. In terms of Party mem-

OLIVER CARLSON is well known as the author of many books and as an expert on propaganda techniques. He has lived in Southern California for many years. He was one of the technical witnesses summoned by the House Committee on Un-American Activities to testify in its Washington hearings on Communism in the motion picture industry.

bership, Los Angeles now ranks second only to New York City. The area in western Los Angeles, between the MGM studio at Culver City and the Columbia, Universal and Warner studios in the San Fernando Valley, today contains the greatest concentration of Communists, fellow-travelers and liberal "innocents" west of the Hudson River.

The Communists have exploited this gold mine with their usual energy and resourcefulness. They have prevailed on Hollywood's glamorous stars to popularize the Party's causes and organizations. Pro-Soviet script writers, actors and musicians have been utilized to ensure the success of any mass demonstration or radio show which served the Party's purposes.

When the Communists were under attack in Hollywood last year, they had no difficulty in finding allies among the big names of the entertainment world.

It was Norman Corwin, from Hollywood, who wrote the script for the nation-wide broadcast denouncing the House Committee's investigation of Communism in the film industry.

It was John Garfield, from Hollywood, who led the first delegation of actors and writers to Washington to protest the activities of the Committee. (Humphrey Bogart, who led the second delegation, has since repudiated his action, stating that he was "ill advised.")

It was Katharine Hepburn, from Hollywood, who fired the opening

gun in the Party's counter-attack against what it calls "thought control." Her speech, at a Henry Wallace mass meeting last May, denounced President Truman, the Republican and Democratic parties and Congress as a whole; this screed against "thought control" received far more publicity than the speech by Wallace. A recording of her talk has been re-broadcast many times, and the Hollywood chapter of the Progressive Citizens of America claims to have printed and distributed more than 3 million copies of it.

II

In this world of innocents, the Stalinists have been able to spawn or take over scores of political organizations, beginning with the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League back in the thirties. Among the Party's later acquisitions have been the Hollywood League for Women Shoppers, the Hollywood Theatre Alliance, the Hollywood Unit of the League against War and Fascism, the Hollywood Mooney Defense Committee, the Hollywood Unit of the American Writers Congress, the Hollywood Unit of the League for Peace and Democracy, the Hollywood Motion Picture Democratic Committee, the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions, the Hollywood Community Radio Group, Inc., the Hollywood Peace Forum, the Hollywood PCA and the Hollywood Writers Mobilization. These organizations

have collected hundreds of thousands of dollars, distributed millions of pieces of literature and staged hundreds of mass meetings for the Party. All of them have been labeled Communist-front organizations, either by the Department of Justice, the House Committee on Un-American Activities or the California Joint Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities.

There are no exact figures available as to the total membership of these groups — and obviously many persons have belonged to more than one of them. But a minimum estimate of the number of people who have belonged to one or more of these “fronts” would be in the vicinity of 60,000. (The entire population of the greater Hollywood area is only about 700,000.)

How many actual Communists are behind this wave of fellow-traveling? In December 1945 J. Edgar Hoover stated that the total Party membership in California was 8553. Somewhat later reports place this figure at approximately 12,000, of whom two thirds are in southern California. Los Angeles alone has some 7000 Communists today.

The executive committee of the American Communist Party was told by Harry Winston in January 1947:

During the past year we recruited some 20,000 members, an increase of 38 per cent. . . . Of the main concentration districts, only Michigan and California maintained a tempo of recruiting throughout the year which brought their growth above the national average. . . .

California, which for many years has striven for a membership of 10,000, can now surpass that mark and become a Party of 12–14,000 members. . . .

The Communist Party of California had issued more than 1,250,000 leaflets during the preceding election campaign.

Part of the reason for the California Party's successes may be found in the fact that in Los Angeles the Party has been shifting its activities from the city's Eastside — which has a heavy percentage of the foreign-born and underprivileged — to the affluent regions of Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Santa Monica and West Los Angeles. This strategic shift has worked wonders for the Communists. The number of Communist clubs in Los Angeles has quadrupled since 1944 (there are now 160), and the Party's finances are in decidedly better shape. In a fund-raising drive last October, the Los Angeles comrades gathered more than \$65,000 for the Party, and raised an additional \$6776 for subscriptions to the *People's World*, the official Communist organ for the West Coast.

Communist strength in Los Angeles may also be measured by an examination of the number of votes cast for outright Party members running for office. In the elections for the Los Angeles City School Board in April 1947, Mrs. LaRue McCormick, the Communist candidate, received 24,543 votes. (This, incidentally, was 9000 more votes than she had got when she ran for the same post four years earlier.) It is, therefore, safe to set 25,000 as the minimum number of Com-

munists and ardent fellow-travelers in Los Angeles.

The parent of Hollywood Communism was a group called the Hollywood Basic Unit of the Communist Party, which was organized in 1935. According to William Kent, a former official of the Los Angeles CP (who told the story to the California Un-American Activities Committee on October 8, 1940), the Hollywood Basic Unit originally included among its members screen writers Frank Davis, John Bright, Titiana Tuttle (wife of the motion-picture director Frank Tuttle) and Viola Brothers Shore.

Kent testified that V. J. Jerome, a representative of the Central Committee of the national CP, came to Hollywood a few years later and reorganized the Basic Unit, adding the following members: actress Gale Sondergaard, Herbert Biberman, director Frank Tuttle and screen writer Sam Ornitz. Still later, according to Kent, the Basic Unit was strengthened by the additions of actors John Garfield and J. Edward Bromberg, actresses Frances Farmer and Jean Muir, playwright Clifford Odets and screen writers Irving Riese and Philip Dunn. Of this group, only Mr. Dunn has subsequently aligned himself with anti-Communist organizations.

III

In pumping its propaganda into Hollywood, the Party has been aided considerably by two "fronts," known,

respectively, as the Peoples Educational Center and the Actors Laboratory, Inc.

The Peoples Educational Center has its headquarters at 1717 North Vine Street, in the heart of Hollywood. It was organized on September 12, 1943 supposedly to "bridge the gap" between Hollywood's workers and the rest of the labor movement in Los Angeles. Whether this high purpose has been achieved is open to question, but the school has certainly justified the time and money the Party put into its founding. It claimed in 1944 to have served more than 1500 students in its first year of operation, and it claims today that more than 10,000 men and women have received instruction in its classes and forums. Within two years of the school's founding, the official Communist Workers School was disbanded, and its students advised to register for classes at the PEC. Many of the instructors at the Workers School also shifted over to the PEC.

The People's Educational Center concentrates mainly on studies dealing with the problems of Hollywood. Its 1947 catalogue, for example, lists three courses in Screen Writing, one course in Motion Picture Directing, a course in Modern Play Writing, one in Radio Speech Technique and one in Radio Comedy Writing. A course entitled "The Motion Pictures, Illusion and Reality" comes to grips with such problems as, Who owns the industry?, Who controls it?, How is content determined?, What is the

rôle of censorship?, Why the star system? The current status of the Guilds and Unions, and, The rôle of motion pictures in international politics. The school also offers its students courses in Hollywood labor problems, in Russian, in Marxian economics, and the inevitable course in "The Soviet Union — a New Civilization."

Like all Communist "front" organizations, the Peoples Educational Center denies that it is controlled by Communists. The fact of Party control is, however, beyond contention. The President of the PEC, Willis J. Hill, was recently expelled from the presidency of a Los Angeles carpenters union local for participation in Communist activities. The director of the school, Sidney Davison, is known to have been a Communist since 1936. The Board of Directors and the Advisory Board of the PEC include John Howard Lawson, Herbert Sorrell, Frank Tuttle and others who have either been directly identified as Communists or have been associated with the Party over a long period of time. The first office of the Peoples Educational Center was located at 547 South Broadway, which was also the address of the Los Angeles Council of Soviet-American Friendship.

The teachers at the PEC have been consistently selected from the ranks of Communists and fellow-travelers. Revels Kayton, the top Negro organizer for the Party on the Pacific Coast, has lectured at the school, as have Carl Winter, a former Secretary

of the Southern Californian CP, and Bruce Minton and Ruth McKenney. (The latter two have not been at the PEC since they were expelled from the Party.) The list of teachers also includes attorneys Leo Gallagher, Charles J. Katz and Ben Margolis, as well as Edward Dmytryk, Karen Moreley, Abe Burrows and Alvah Bessie.

Actors Laboratory, Inc., located at 1455 North Laurel Avenue in Hollywood, is something else again. Its primary function apparently is to draw ambitious young actors and actresses into the orbit of Communist front organizations. Ostensibly the Actors Laboratory is a combination training school and experimental theatre, but in fact it has always been more political than artistic. Communist Party literature is always available at the Actors Lab, and the organization has frequently donated funds and talent to help put across pro-Communist demonstrations. Its activities are well publicized in the *People's World*.

The list of sponsors and directors of the Actors Laboratory comprises a representative cross-section of Hollywood Stalinism. The "audience sponsors" include Alvah Bessie, Ring Lardner, Jr., Albert Maltz, Dalton Trumbo, Donald Ogden Stewart, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Ornitz, Gale Sondergaard and Sidney Buchman.

The members of the Actors Lab's executive board and faculty include: J. Edward Bromberg, who came to Hollywood from the Group Theatre

in New York, where, according to testimony received by the House Committee, he was a member of the local Party faction; actor Morris Carnovsky, who has turned up on sponsoring committees to defend Harry Bridges and Gerhart Eisler; Rose Hobart, who has been active in the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, the PCA and other fronts; Larry Parks, the actor who has become notorious for his ardent defense of Soviet and Communist policies in the past two years, and who has also been active in the Hollywood Independent Citizens Committee; Hy Kraft, who was a sponsor of the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League, who signed a petition in 1938 justifying Stalin's purges in Russia, and who has been a frequent speaker at front meetings; Abraham L. Polonsky, a screen and radio writer who was (according to the *People's World* of September 24, 1946) secretary of the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, and who was also active in the Hollywood Community Radio Group, another Communist front; Anthony Quinn, a popular Mexican-born screen star who is a favorite of the *People's World*; and Jacobina Caro, whose husband is Sidney Davison of the PEC, and who was registered as a Communist in Los Angeles in 1940 under the name of Mrs. Jacobina Davison.

IV

In their campaign to gain control of the Hollywood trade unions, the Communists were aided by the fact

that the previous boss of these unions was Willi Bioff, a racketeer who aroused an enormous amount of resentment. The Communists, in opposing Bioff, were enabled to pose as the representatives of decent trade unionism.

They got the indirect assistance of the producers, who adopted a policy of building up Herbert Sorrell as a counterweight to Bioff. Sorrell, working closely with the Communists, built up a dual labor organization known as the Conference of Studio Unions. He hoped to use the CSU to take control of Hollywood's entire labor movement, and he came within an ace of succeeding.

He was prevented largely by a group of men led by Roy Brewer, a representative of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees. In the face of one of the most vicious smear campaigns ever seen on the West Coast, the IATSE was enabled to stave off the Communist threat. The Conference of Studio Unions was demoralized and broken by two long and costly strikes; it is now a thoroughly discredited organization. The Hollywood unions, which have about 25,000 members, have largely purged their ranks of Communist sympathizers.

Late in November 1947 Los Angeles newspapers carried the story that Herbert Sorrell and his fellow officers in the Motion Picture Painters local No. 644 had signed non-Communist affidavits, as required by the Taft-Hartley Act. At the same time Sorrell

issued a statement vociferously denying that he was a Communist. Roy Brewer, however, declared in a letter to J. Parnell Thomas of the House Committee on Un-American Activities that:

There is no evidence that Mr. Sorrell has broken his association with well-known Communists and Communist sympathizers in and outside of the labor movement here in Hollywood. And if a man is to be judged by the company he keeps, then Mr. Sorrell *has not* broken with his old Communist and pro-Communist associates — nor they with him.

Mr. Herbert Sorrell's name still remains as one of the sponsors of the Communist-operated and controlled Hollywood People's Educational Center, the American Youth for Democracy (formerly Young Communist League), *People's World* . . . and other Communist front organizations in Southern California. There is no evidence to our knowledge that Mr. Sorrell has resigned or repudiated a single one of his many pro-Communist connections.

Since modesty is not one of Mr. Sorrell's outstanding virtues his failure to speak up in repudiation of his long pro-Communist past cannot be charged to modesty.

Those of us within the trade union movement of Hollywood who have had to meet the smear campaign of the Communists for the past several years and who have had to meet their onslaught and their tactics day in and day out no longer naïvely consider that non-membership in the Communist Party or the signing of non-Communist affidavits is a guarantee that those who make such declarations and sign such affidavits have necessarily severed their organizational or ideological bonds with Communism.

We must be convinced of their non-Communism by open and outright condemnation and repudiation of their Communist principles, Communist tactics,

Communist organizations and Communist associates.

If and when Mr. Sorrell and his associates follow this line of action none shall be happier than we. But until this is done we remain skeptics. Formal disassociation from the Communist movement is an old Communist trick advised by both Lenin and Stalin to their followers when the going got "hot."

The tide has also turned in the talent guilds. Fellow-traveling is no longer fashionable. Actors, directors, writers and producers are cutting loose from the Communists as fast as they can. Emmett Lavery, who as President of the Screen Writers Guild, stood by complacently for more than two years while the comrades ran the show, has now kicked over the traces.

So, too, has novelist James M. Cain, whose Author's Authority Plan was seized upon last year by the Communists as an ideal vehicle for promoting their control of the writing profession. At that time Cain was lauded by the Communists for his courage, his brilliance and his "social consciousness." But Cain eventually got fed up. In a letter sent to the Screen Writers Guild on November 10, 1947, he declared that the charges made that the Screen Writers Guild was loaded with Communists were true. He said:

As we are now constituted the Party is more important to certain members commanding a majority of the Executive Board than the interests of the members; and leftist propaganda is more important to the *Screen Writer* [official organ of the Screen Writers Guild] than material of interest to writers.

In both the Screen Writers and the Screen Actors Guilds the pro-Communist slates for officers and delegates have been overwhelmingly defeated. Within the Screen Writers Guild, however, where the control of the Communists had been firmly established, a vicious internal fight is still raging. Trumbo, Lawson, Maltz and the others who were cited for contempt of Congress, and who have been discharged by the studios, are waging a bitter war which may well wreck the Screen Writers Guild.

v

The growth of Communist Party membership and influence in Hollywood got under way simultaneously with the growth of Upton Sinclair's "End Poverty in California" movement in 1934-35. Social consciousness became a fad in the movie colony; hundreds of motion-picture celebrities became deeply engrossed in solving world problems. Drawing room tables were stocked with the works of Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Browder. Every author who had written a "proletarian novel" was lionized as only Hollywood can do the job. The astrologers, spiritualists, mystics and fortune tellers who had so long adorned Hollywood salons were unceremoniously dumped overboard. In their places came spokesmen for the Communist Party or its satellite organizations, who explained (between cocktails) dialectical materialism, the inevitability of the rule of the proletariat and the fact that

Communism was "Twentieth-Century Americanism."

The most potent and vocal of the early front organizations was the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League. Almost everyone in Hollywood was willing to subscribe to anti-Nazi sentiments, and by exploiting this feeling the Communists gained access to thousands of people hitherto unapproachable. Screen actors and writers generously threw open the doors of their homes for benefits — benefits not only for the victims of Nazi aggression but for victims of fascism anywhere and everywhere. Money poured in upon the Anti-Nazi League. The élite of Europe's refugees from Germany, Austria and Italy were flown to Hollywood to tell their story. High-powered press and publicity departments were established. A special youth section was organized.

In describing the situation at that time I declared that "no one will ever know the total number of cocktails consumed in behalf of Loyalist Spain; the cups of tea sipped to aid Southern sharecroppers. One swam in the private pools of Hollywood stars to aid the Red armies of China . . . Liveried chauffeurs sat . . . at the wheels of sleek high-powered limousines while their owners graced some nearby picket line. In their determined effort to destroy the power of imperialist Japan, many stars vowed never again to wear silk hose. Gale Sondergaard told a mass meeting that she shuddered with discomfort each time she was compelled to wear a

silken gown on a movie set. Meanwhile, the victims of Soviet persecution were either ignored or denounced outright.

The disillusionment with Communism which set in at the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact was soon forgotten after Pearl Harbor. With Russia our ally in the war, and with the pressures of the government directed toward making Russia and Stalin popular with the American people, the Hollywood Communists rapidly made up for their losses during the days of the pact. Scores of thousands of people connected with the motion picture industry fell into line and soon became enmeshed in new front organizations.

A second period of disillusionment began about a year ago. (Hollywood, it might be noted, does not rid itself of illusions easily.) The ruthlessness of the Communists in the organizations they controlled had a lot to do with

this new disillusionment, but the world pattern of Soviet imperialism and diplomatic intransigence was probably the main cause.

But whatever the reason, it is a fact that, for the first time in a decade, the Communists in Hollywood are on the defensive. They have lost control of the trade unions. They are no longer a force in the Screen Actors Guild, and they can no longer hope to lead the Screen Writers Guild. Motion-picture magnates who only a few months ago associated familiarly with thousand-dollar-a-week Communist writers have grown hostile, and the Producers Association has announced that it will employ no known Communists in the future.

In short, the deep red which has colored so much of Hollywood for the past few years is rapidly fading to a light pink. The lush era of easy money, vast crowds and big names is over for the Communists in Hollywood.

FROM BEE-STING, SPIDER-BITE

BY CHARLES EDWARD EATON

From bee-sting, spider-bite, thorn-prick, hammer-bruise, flesh learns;
Through lip-brush, hand-grasp, the body knows.
Nothing there is that touches but goes
Taut, limp, soft, hard, dry, moist, chills or burns.

So we can say to every memory of eyes:
Here burned hot and quick, there chilled slow to cool,
Now the sober judge, then the passionate fool —
And thus by knowing absent things the flesh grows wise.

MURDER AS A SEX PRACTICE

BY FRANK C. WALDROP

CRIMES of sexual perversion strike the most hideous blows of all. Whoever is not killed is usually withered, and families of both criminal and victim go under a cloud that may be generations in passing.

Consequently, knowledge of the facts surrounding criminal sexuality is hard to get at, harder to analyze and still harder to convey. Police everywhere will testify that it is the usual and only too natural practice of families to try to conceal sexual crimes short of outright rape or murder. The victim's family wants oblivion, not justice in the courts. The criminal's family wants another chance to redeem him. Neither wants to face the fact that habitual sexual perversion of any kind is a medical problem, almost beyond the grasp of medicine itself in its present state of knowledge.

As to how much actual violent sexual crime there may be, nobody can guess with any accuracy because of the shame and secrecy that surround all parties. But even so, the FBI records one rape or criminal assault somewhere in the United States every 43 minutes. The national police bookings

for rape have gone up 62 per cent in the past ten years. Arrests of homosexuals and other types of perverts have gone up by 142 per cent. J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, has made repeated declarations in recent years to the effect that crimes of sex are a growing police problem.

And yet, the law is not armed to deal with the sex criminal. It is magnificently armed to deal with almost any imaginable problem involving property. But when called on to dispose of a man unmistakably marked as the most revolting and fearful offender against the person, it is stuttering and confused. No state in the Union can claim a safe conscience on the subject of crimes involving sex.

Let us consider some examples.

One day last October, twelve-year-old Howard L. pointed to a spot on the ground in Thatcher's woods, on the western edge of Chicago.

"That's it," he said. "His head was there." And then Howard began to cry.

For "there" was the place where a few days before he had cut the throat of Lonnie F., aged seven, and then

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smashed Lonnie's skull with a 30-pound concrete slab while a nine-year-old friend held Lonnie's legs.

In court, Howard confessed the murder unhesitatingly, but stipulated with the law:

"I'll talk, *but don't ask me everything that happened in the woods.*"

And so, as to what did happen in the woods that Howard thought it worse to admit than murder, we have only guesses. But the facts of homosexuality, perversions and general illicit relations between grade-school children in Howard's neighborhood were common knowledge, according to both police and school authorities.

Should anybody have acted on that "common knowledge" to save Lonnie F. from dying in the woods?

II

Within a month after the killing in Thatcher's Woods in Chicago, police found the bloody, battered body of five-year-old Miretta J. in a children's play cave at Bakersfield, California. She had been seen last at the grocery store in company of Joyce N., an overdeveloped, bouncy girl of thirteen whose parents were already worried because Joyce was so "high-strung" and sex-crazy.

The news was broadcast, of course, and Joyce's brother remembered having seen her with Miretta. He asked a few questions at dinner, and a family tragedy slowly unrolled. One lie and contradiction followed another, one alarmed glance between the parents led to the next, and before morn-

ing the whole horror was theirs. Joyce told her parents she had led Miretta to the play cave and committed sexual indecencies upon her. Miretta cried and said she'd tell her grandma, so Joyce beat her to death with a rock, returned home and began to help the household get dinner.

Joyce's father, the next morning, went to the police to tell the awful story but he stopped at the steps of the station house. Who can blame him? Finally, somebody else remembered having seen the two girls together, police asked the first questions and out it all came. As this is written, the law of California still hesitates. It has not decided what to do. Joyce's parents can now reflect in horror that nothing adequate was done about her last year. They "were worried" about her then because she had killed several pet cats and dogs and had held one neighbor child's head under water until it very nearly drowned.

True, they had taken Joyce to the family doctor, and then to a psychiatrist, but somebody had failed to read the warning signals aright, and two families are now shattered.

On Sunday afternoon, March 2, 1947, Jacqueline M., aged eleven, went to the movies in Malden, Massachusetts. She did not come home.

About 9:00 A.M. on Monday three small schoolboys found a dead body in a vacant lot off Pearl Street. It was Jacqueline. Mrs. Francis C. heard about it on the radio and immediately thought of her son Robert, aged seventeen, who had come home Sun-

day night late and disheveled. She called the Malden police. It took the police only a short time to prove him the killer and would-be rapist. Defense pleaded "insanity" and it worked. He is away now, presumably for life — but maybe not, after all. For consider, now, Robert's criminal record. It dates back to June 9, 1943, when at the age of thirteen he was charged with breaking and entering. This was the beginning of a four-year criminal career in which Robert was caught in five serious crimes (two of them sexual) and received five quick paroles. The last parole, given despite the pleas of his parents that he needed confinement, came less than a month before he committed the murder. He had been judged by state psychiatrists a "non-committable" under the insanity statutes then prevailing. The law insisted that he be paroled, eventually to commit murder. Now the Massachusetts law is changed — but too late to be of help to Jacqueline M.

The law could also have done better by three-year-old Charles B., whose strangled body was found last July under a porch near his home in the southeast section of Chicago. Police at once thought of Joseph B., 27, a neighborhood pest who had just been released from jail after serving eleven months on a sex charge. Joseph B. promptly confessed to the murder but was vague on details. He explained merely that he had had "a terrific urge to squeeze something."

This man had begun to show his nature as far back as 1936, as a petty

thief and small criminal of the sort police always grab in general round-ups. But nobody had ever bothered to find out what made him tick, even after he was convicted, in August 1946, for contributing to the delinquency of a minor child. He was released after eleven months by lawful order, because he had been a "good" prisoner. He promptly committed murder. The law should have seen that coming.

The law's eyes and the law's arm could also have acted in better fashion in the case of Howard M. of Washington, D. C.

On July 7, 1944, the Metropolitan Police department of the Capital received a complaint that Nancy C., aged five, had been "assaulted." In District of Columbia law, sexual abuses of children had no legal meaning unless homosexuality or rape were involved. Howard M., 29 years old, was married, was arrested for the crime upon Nancy. He told police that his first recollection of exposing himself to a girl was when he was four years old, and that it had been a steady practice throughout his life. He claimed to have an "uncontrollable urge" to expose himself to young girls and to have sexual contacts of varied kinds with them, because they are "young and innocent." He said he was aware of the meaning of his acts but could do nothing to control them. The upshot of his palavers with the judge about his "uncontrollable urge" was a \$1000 fine and a year in jail, suspended on condition

that he would consult a psychiatrist.

That was in September 1944. On December 9, 1944, the Metropolitan police received a complaint that Ann M., aged eight, had been "assaulted." Howard M., out on probation and supposedly under psychiatric care, was again responsible. This time he had committed an even more revolting and obscene crime than before. He said he could go two months without taking his cruel pleasure of a child, but not longer. On January 11, 1945, he was sentenced again to only one year in prison, and again fined \$1000 for "assault." If he ever received any thorough psychiatric treatment, it does not show on his police record.

The law has freed many another sex criminal under comparably weak terms:

Thirty-year-old William H., on parole from the New York state penitentiary for the rape of a thirteen-year-old girl, was arrested some time ago near Barron, Wisconsin, as a drunken driver. He was brought to St. Paul and there confessed raping and robbing the owner of the car in Minneapolis.

He had been arrested first for rape in New York, in 1928. He had received a suspended sentence. He was arrested a year later at Nassau, Long Island for rape in the second degree, and again received a suspended sentence.

In Minnesota, finally, he was sent to the State Penitentiary to serve 80 years for rape and robbery.

III

Admittedly, the assignment of spotting a sex criminal early is a difficult and delicate one, and success often hinges on pure good luck. For instance, on June 26, 1946, a Chicago policeman off duty threw a flower pot at a young man he had accidentally discovered attempting burglary, and hit him. When the burglar was booked, another alert policeman noticed a familiar flourish in his signature. It recalled a piece of writing every Chicago policeman had been studying carefully — the note left for the parents of six-year-old Suzanne Degnan, who had been kidnapped from her bed a few weeks before.

In a few days it was all unraveled. William Heirens, aged seventeen, confessed he had not only stolen, murdered and dismembered Suzanne Degnan, but also killed two grown women and wounded another. On the wall above the body of one, he had written with her lipstick: "For heaven's sake, catch me before I kill any more; I cannot control myself."

The psychiatrists who eventually examined Heirens did not agree with this self-judgment. They found that:

This patient, in our opinion, is not suffering from any psychosis nor is he mentally retarded; he has average intelligence. He has a deep sexual perversion and is emotionally insensitive and unstable.

He has sufficient intelligence to understand the nature and object of the proceedings against him. He rightly comprehends his own position in regard to these proceedings and has sufficient mind

to conduct his defense in a rational and reasonable manner.

He has repeatedly stated to us that he has always been aware of the nature and purpose of his acts, which acts are the basis of the present proceedings. . . .

Such was the judgment on William Heirens as a rational animal, signed by Dr. Foster Kennedy, director of neurological service for Bellevue hospital in New York City, Dr. Harry R. Hoffman, director of the Neuropsychiatric Institute of Chicago and Dr. William H. Haines, director of the behavior clinic of the criminal court of Cook County, Illinois.

Heirens had been stealing women's underclothes and enjoying their feel and color since he had been nine. First he took them from neighbors' clothes lines. Then he grew bold enough to search for them in basements. Finally, by the time he was twelve or thirteen, he had become a skilled burglar, and had begun to steal other things. He found that he much preferred windows to doors. The first time he faced an open window with the determination to go through and see what he would find inside, he had a sexual orgasm. He was then thirteen years old.

Girls never interested him. He went straight from stealing undergarments to climbing in dark windows. Going into the home of his first murder victim, he had the usual sexual satisfaction. But then a dog barked and "the lady started hollering," so he stabbed her through the throat "just to keep her quiet." She did not other-

wise attract him. When he read the next day's newspaper accounts of the mysterious murder "it did not bother me, no remorse — I read just the beginning; then I got tired." As to Suzanne Degnan, Heirens denied he had any ideas about her at all, and claimed he could barely recall it. In the end he pleaded guilty to 25 burglaries, one robbery, one assault to commit murder and three murders, and was sentenced to life three times over.

Heirens was found to be completely normal physically and intellectually.

Yet he unquestionably is what the psychiatrists said him to be, the creature of a "deep sexual perversion, unstable and hysterical." Nevertheless, when the Chicago police caught him, in June 1942, trying to break into a basement, he was treated as just another juvenile delinquent and sent to a correction school. He was then thirteen, and even a routine psychiatric examination could have detected his instability. He was, for example, completely insensitive to pain, always a warning symptom of psychological hysteria. When he stole again after his release from the correction school, the authorities merely sent him back for two more years. It was not until *after* he had murdered that the law administered the psychological tests which showed, what was by then obvious, that he had a "definite emotional insensitivity . . . severe enough to be considered abnormal, as well as a blunting of moral concepts."

Even if psychiatrists had discovered Heirens' criminal tendencies in time,

the law would not have been able to do much about it. Juvenile law is based on the premise that wayward children can be corrected; they must not be punished as adults are for the same offenses. But the correction, in almost every state, is superficial. It is limited, for the most part, to work and schooling; there are few if any provisions for the sort of psychiatric treatment Heirens needed, and even the slight provisions the law does make are only faintly enforced. The law assumes that poverty and the debilitating moral effects of a slum environment are the sources of juvenile delinquency. The law overlooks, or at least does not provide for dealing with, the "natural delinquent," *i. e.*, the youth who is an offender for psychological, rather than social, reasons.

IV

The Loeb-Leopold performance is a classic example. This half-forgotten triumph of judicial nonsense sticks faintly in the national memory mainly because of Clarence Darrow, defense attorney for two homosexual murderers, Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold, who in May of 1924 were just eighteen and nineteen years of age, respectively.

They were also children of the rich. For some reason still unknown, they wanted to "do the perfect crime." So they checked over a list of possible victims and selected a cousin of Loeb's, Bobby Franks, aged thirteen. They killed him and were caught.

Their trial was one of the great public dramas of the 1920s. Darrow admitted their guilt and pleaded only for merciful understanding. Psychiatrists filled the court record with their jargon. The contest was for the life or death of these two boys, and Darrow gave the country pause by crying out in court:

These boys are minors and I cannot understand the glib attorneys who insist on hanging two boys, one eighteen and the other nineteen. I have never seen a more deliberate effort to turn human society into an organization of ravening wolves.

It was not a jury trial, and Darrow had no easy touch. Loeb and Leopold were tried before a court of one judge alone, who listened to 487,500 words of testimony throughout thirteen melodramatic days before announcing his verdict: life imprisonment in the Illinois state penitentiary. Darrow had won his forensic triumph; he had also set the nation to garbling Freudian sophisms right at the dinner table.

Twelve years later, Richard Loeb was himself murdered in a homosexual prison brawl. Leopold was lost somewhere in the shadows of the jail. Darrow now said for publication: "He [Loeb] is better off than Leopold — better off dead."

One might ask whether Loeb was any better off dead in 1936 than he would have been in 1924.

Stated very briefly, our laws for dealing with sexual criminals are barbarous for two reasons: They make it

possible for the incurable sex maniac to remain unconfined, and they also make it possible for the curable pervert to remain untreated.

If a child is a habitual thief it is quite likely that he is suffering from a profound emotional disorder. Such a child should be required by law to submit to a psychiatric examination. Psychiatry is not yet an exact science, and there are a great many perversions that it is helpless to cure. But it is all we have to work with, and it must be given its chance. Where a psychiatric disorder is found to be the cause of criminal tendencies, psychiatric treatment must be made mandatory. And where the disease or perversion is found to be incurable, society must, in self-defense, require

confinement of the sexual criminal.

A number of states, including Massachusetts, California, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Vermont and Wisconsin, have recently passed laws providing for stricter confinement of sex criminals. In almost every one, however, sloppy enforcement has betrayed the legislators. The District of Columbia is working on a comprehensive codification of sexual felonies which will be put into legislative form some time in 1948. It is hoped that this act, when finally passed by Congress, will serve as a model for the various states to follow. But until adequate medical and legal standards are set up and enforced, we can only expect to be periodically shocked by horrendous crimes of degeneracy.

CURVES OF QUIET

BY JOSEPH JOEL KEITH

The curve of the moon was held
in the curve of the branches,
and was held there gently.
The curve of the hill accepted
the curve of sky.
None of the softness
claimed another softness,
but all was blended
into the mellow curves
of togetherness,
into the blue and silent
gentleness of nightfall.

AMERICA'S TRAFFIC HEADACHES

BY SAM SHULSKY

NOT a single city of any size in the United States even claims to have solved the automobile parking problem. The problem has evoked a vast amount of fuss and furor and a flood of ingenious schemes. Cars are being stacked away in tall buildings, jammed into empty lots and crammed into subterranean warehouses. But our mid-town streets are now more cluttered than ever before. Traffic has been slowed to a walk, even though three to four million Americans are still waiting for their first postwar cars and even though the auto count is down by several more millions through non-replacement of worn-out vehicles.

Within the next year or two everyone who can afford an auto will be able to buy one. More and more cars will be honking for the right of way and for places to park. Traffic engineers forecast that we will have forty to fifty million automobiles. But our streets will be no wider.

Traffic engineers are the first to admit that there is no easy road to perfect parking. A recent poll of 200 cities (including some of only 25,000 population) brought replies

which led the Institute of Traffic Engineers to declare that "all of them are worried about the traffic problem." In Milwaukee, motor traffic is 92 per cent above wartime levels. New York, Chicago and a host of other centers report it is up 50 per cent and more. Plainfield, N. J., with a population of about 35,000 finds traffic congestion and lack of parking space so serious that vehicle movement in the center of town is all but impossible. The mayor of a Minnesota country town of less than 1000 population complains: "Main Street on Saturday nights is blocked by cars parked two and three deep. We can hardly cram any more cars into the road and traffic barely moves." The American Society of Civil Engineers sums up the problem when it describes the increasing nation-wide traffic jam as "a malady menacing the cores of American cities, threatening the whole urban organism and causing an economic loss of \$2 billion a year."

The cause of this malady is obvious. Parking cars is a problem in elementary space measurements which, even though it is on a single plane, has

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given our best engineering minds some prodigious headaches. Today's automobile, luxuriously spread out fore and aft, requires nearly 200 square feet of parking space when it is sidled into place by a skilled garage attendant. If the owner does the parking, the required space is apt to be closer to 250 square feet. (The American motoring public, moreover, has shown that it won't buy Europe's midget cars, even during a period of emergency.) In the heart of the modern American city — and parking surveys have established that a motorist doesn't want to walk more than 1000 feet after parking his car — the space needed for parking a full-sized car commands rentals running into thousands of dollars a year. And, very simply, that's why the automobile owner can't rent the space for a dollar or two a day. Moreover, that's why everyone complaining about the lack of parking space wants *someone else* to do something about it. That "someone" is usually the city government or one of its specially-created agencies — a traffic or parking authority — which can, presumably, lose money without having anyone in particular make it up.

Those who pursue this line of argument rely for support on the experiences of a very few cities which have tried to do something about the parking mess, even though on an experimental basis and with highly indecisive results. San Francisco, for example, with an automobile census of more than 175,000 got nationwide

publicity by providing space for 1700 of them in a garage built below a mid-town park. Detroit, with 408,000 automobiles, is thinking of a similar underground space for 1000 vehicles; Los Angeles with nearly 500,000 cars, is planning space for 2700. Cleveland, with an auto count of 255,000, reports in a survey that it accommodates 700 in an underground exhibition hall — when the hall is not otherwise occupied. Montclair, N. J., has just appropriated \$168,000 for three lots with a total capacity of 250 cars, and Grand Forks, N. D., is bravely facing the problem by opening a city-owned lot accommodating 45.

In other words, every community of any size is making some effort — substantial or otherwise — if only to be able to say: "You see, we admit the auto is here to stay and we are doing something about parking it."

II

But, unfortunately, the jam, far from being broken, gets worse daily. The American Society of Civil Engineers recently asked 23 cities in the United States and two in Canada, all with populations above 100,000: "How much relief has your city obtained from traffic congestion during the past 12 months?" The replies were not very encouraging:

"We have tried to do many things, but I doubt whether there has been much accomplished."

"We have been able to accomplish practically nothing in relieving con-

gestion. A traffic survey was proposed and abandoned."

"Authorities have done very little, if anything. . . . A great deal of field data has been accumulated and traffic recommendations are in the offing, but meanwhile the situation has grown worse."

New York City, with a native automobile population of about 750,000, and with more than half that many again streaming into the city daily, is, of course, the world's best example of how a city can become hopelessly caught in traffic jams. Thanks to years of highway planning, Manhattan Island is one of the easiest centers in the world to get to. There are the East Side and West Side express roads, bridges and ferries over the rivers and tunnels under them. But once the motorist reaches the metropolis he finds himself enmeshed in a spider's web from which there is no escape. The late Will Rogers, back in the days when cars were plentiful, used to advise: "If you ever find a place to park your car in New York, don't move it. Leave that car there for parking purposes and buy another one for driving around."

The New Yorker who thinks he should be able to drive his car right up to the door of Radio City Music Hall naturally calls upon his elected officials to do something about it. Right now the politicians are doing what all politicians can always do, safely and cheaply — talk. They are talking of spending \$25 million or

\$37 million (the exact amount seems to be obscure) to construct 42 garages and parking lots, some above ground, some underground, capable of parking 15,000 automobiles. Assuming that two cars will use a single space every day, this project would accommodate about 30,000 cars, or 2 per cent of the automobiles that move over New York City streets daily.

The problem can be viewed from another angle. In downtown New York there stands the block-square Equitable Building, one of the important buildings in the financial district — but only one of many. It is bounded on the west by heavily-trafficked Broadway and on the other three sides by lanes laid out in Colonial days and barely wide enough for two cars to pass. Yet this 40-story structure (only half the height of the city's taller skyscrapers) has 12,000 occupants and is visited daily by 65,000 persons. If all these people came by car (at the national average of 1.7 riders per private automobile) all New York City's proposed parking lots laid end to end couldn't take care of the traffic at this building alone.

III

New York, of course, is the extreme example of a crowded city. But New York or Sioux Falls, every city is hard pressed to provide space for its motorists. That these motorists should even expect to find space available for their convenience derives from the curious line of reasoning which holds that parking facilities can be

operated at a partial, or, if necessary, total financial loss. For, surprisingly enough, in all this talk of curing the parking blight, no one has been found suggesting, with any conviction, that perhaps the question of whether there can be parking for all should be put to the acid test: Can it pay its way? Is it economically sound? Those who call loudest for municipally-provided parking space seem to have forgotten about private enterprise, the economic system under which this country operates.

In fact, it is the Big Business and Private Enterprise interests — real estate and merchandising, to name only two — who are calling loudest for the government to do something. It is these interests who now feel that the city administration is honor bound to provide about 100 square feet of vacant space for every person who wants to rent offices or shop in their stores. These interests built their structures right up to the property line, and they yelled murder when it was suggested that traffic might be expedited if they provided truck loading docks within their buildings and away from the public road. They run their own businesses on the principle: "Let free enterprise determine the price. If people want anything they will pay for it. If the price is too high, they won't buy and the price will have to come down."

But now these groups are demanding help from the city government. There is not a word from them about selling parking space themselves, nor

is there the slightest hint that the very congestion which makes their property so valuable may rule out the possibility of providing cheap parking space nearby. They believe, selfishly, that there's going to be an ox gored somewhere and that it might as well be "the taxpayer's." It is high time the taxpayer pointed out that he has no intention of subsidizing auto parking in mid-town Los Angeles, Boston, Utica or New Orleans.

He could further argue, supported by economic law, that there would be no shortage of parking space if the market for it were allowed to find its own level, unaffected by the overhanging threat of municipal, subsidized intervention and if it were freed of stupid zoning laws. What this level would be, of course, would depend on the size of the city, its geographic layout and the driving habits of its motorists. In Buffalo it might be a charge of, say, 75 cents an hour. In Chicago it might be \$2 an hour. In New York's 45th Street west of Broadway, a fee of \$5 for the theatre hours of 8:30 to 11 P. M. might well provide all the space motorists would want at that price.

Asking the automobile owner to pay such rates for space would very quickly eliminate about 95 per cent of the demand.

This leads directly to another question:

Is it not possible that the need for parking space has been highly overrated, 'by both motorists and downtown merchants?

There is some solid scientific research on the side of anyone answering this question in the affirmative. Leslie Williams, City Planning Engineer of the American Transit Association, points out that more private cars used the intersection of Forty-Second Street and Fifth Avenue — the heart of New York City — in 1925 than in 1939, when there were twice as many autos registered in metropolitan New York. But the movement of people and goods at this intersection is greater today than ever before, indicating that a midtown business center needs customers, not cars, to prosper.

Another study conducted by no less partial an organization than the National Retail Dry Goods Association disclosed that in Philadelphia only 8 per cent of the shoppers in the city's central department stores arrived by private auto, while eleven times that number came by public transportation. The rest of the shoppers walked.

"These facts," said Robert A. Mitchell, chief of Philadelphia's bureau of traffic engineering, "bear out what traffic engineers have believed to be true for many years, that the great bulk of business is done by persons using mass transportation." The taxpayer may well ask: "If 88 of every 100 persons can get to the stores by public conveyances, why should I be asked to put up money to provide for the convenience of the few who insist on the luxury of private transportation?"

IV

The American motorist, who still looks upon his car as his magic coach to everywhere, ought to begin forsaking romantic dreams and turn to realism. He will have to learn to look upon parking in the city as a comfort just about as difficult to come by as a backyard vegetable garden, seats in the trolley or bus, privacy in the park, country-fresh air, tree-shaded lawns and wide verandahs. Americans will not take kindly to this point of view, for the auto has become an integral part of family life and often takes precedence over domestic requirements in family finances. But the mental readjustment will have to come, sooner or later. The American motorist has no Constitutional guarantee of the right to park on New York's Fifth Avenue, Boston's Scollay Square or Sauk Center's Main Street, and only the refusal of politicians to give him the bad news has kept the misconception alive.

The private motor car has no more right to parking space in our midtown business streets than the promoters of old-fashioned block parties. A concert-goer has no more right to park his car outside Carnegie Hall in New York or a night club in Chicago than he would have to tie his horse and buggy there to a lamp-post. If he wants to live in a community large enough to support big-city pleasures, he must give up to a large extent the convenience of driving to them in his own car

—a privilege he could enjoy to the full when he attended the Saturday night band concerts back home in Wigwam.

Big-city life, it is conceded, has many drawbacks—the crowds, the noise, the dirt, the lack of space and privacy. Everyone who wants to live in the city realizes that these, taken together, are the price he must pay for the advantages of the larger community. Why, then, should a city administration be expected to spend money in catering to the 1.7 occupants of the private automobile when public transportation facilities are themselves in need of improvement throughout the country? By what point of privilege does the motor car owner, who scorns public transportation, raise the demand that city funds be spent for his comfort?

Traffic experts are agreed that the dream of traveling everywhere within the city in an automobile is a physical impossibility. Even the United States, which has a good record of accomplishing “the impossible,” cannot ignore the physical law that says no two objects can occupy the same space at the same time. So long as we build cities, so long as we sponsor the concentration of merchandising and amusements, of medical, legal and governmental services, the parking problem is insoluble. There is no prospect of finding mid-town land of such low economic value that it is fit for nothing but auto storage.

It is important that people get to these business centers. But how they

get there is not important. Therefore, say the engineers, the only logical solution to inadequate parking space and resultant traffic jams is a reduction in the number of private cars in congested areas. An exhaustive study of Pittsburgh's traffic problems by its regional planning association led to the conclusion that

mass carriers can transport people in and out of the Triangle [the main business district] more efficiently than the private automobile, both with respect to street space usage and requirement of terminal facilities. In the huge increase in autos anticipated by 1960 every additional customer that can be won by mass transportation will ease the traffic troubles of the motorist and will tend to give added economic stability to the area as a central business and shopping district.

In other words, mass, not exclusive, transportation should be encouraged.

The fifty motorists who now require 29 private cars to get downtown, should be transferred to a single public conveyance at a tremendous saving in street space.

A street which can carry only 2600 persons per hour in private cars must be reserved for trackless trolleys, buses and streetcars. These can transport ten to twelve thousand persons in the same time, and they do not require curb parking space. Thus, two more lanes are automatically opened for traffic.

The ineffectual, half-hearted approach which has distinguished the first quarter century of wrestling with the traffic problem is as outmoded as the hand-operated stop-

and-go signal. Instead of creeping up on the problem with all sorts of palliatives and piecemeal nostrums — one-way streets, fifteen-minute parking here (on Mondays and Fridays only) and one-hour parking there (between 1 A.M. and 7 A.M.) — our cities will have to step out boldly.

For example, to end the monstrous traffic confusion which has been snarling New York traffic for years might well require a law forbidding all private pleasure cars to be driven — let alone parked — on Manhattan

Island south of Ninety-Sixth Street unless they have police certification of an emergency.

Such an injunction, of course, would prove a severe jolt to many drivers. But it would also clear the streets for the purpose they were intended — to move the most people with the greatest safety and the least inconvenience. Legally, it would only be a reassertion of the English common law which holds that “the King’s Highway was not intended to be used as a stableyard.”

GOLDEN BOY

BY ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN

Sprung of innumerable suns
And wide time where vast suns are lost,
This day’s dandelions have spread
The meadow with a solar frost.

They give the suns back, light for light,
Their fires rise and gild the air.
A five-year child plays with their fire,
He has a cool sun for his hair.

The golden blossoms have but few
Narrow days before their night,
The golden boy has a few years
Before he, too, must leave the light.

Yet this child has something warmer
Than all the galaxies above,
As he runs from flower to flower,
He glows with the precious fire of love.

VISHINSKY: RUSSIAN WARMONGER

BY MARK VISHNIAK

WHEN Andrei Vishinsky first viewed the movie *Mission to Moscow*, it is said, he was unable to restrain his merriment. Throwing his arms about a Red Army general sitting beside him, he shook helplessly for several minutes in a convulsion of laughter. He had reason for amusement; for Vishinsky is short and beardless and the tall, heavily bearded individual haranguing the purge trial prisoners on the screen, from his position on the prosecutor's tribune, bore the least possible resemblance to the original.

The error was presumably unintentional. Yet to many informed observers, it must have seemed ironically appropriate. Since 1920, when he abruptly cast off his former allegiance to the Menshevik faction of the Russian Social Democratic party to join with the victorious Bolsheviks, Vishinsky has been an adept at donning false faces when it served his uses. Unique among the upper Communist Party hierarchy in that he is not an "Old Bolshevik," he has devoted 27 years to perfecting the art of bowing and scraping before the lords of the

Soviet Union in order to erase the memory of his shady political origins. In this he seems to have eminently succeeded. When Stalin decided to settle scores with his remaining foes in the Party he named Vishinsky Chief Prosecutor in the infamous Moscow show trials of 1936-38. Responding eagerly to the challenge, Vishinsky proved his absolute loyalty to Stalin by hurling cries of "mad dog," "traitor" and "stinking dregs" at intimate former colleagues, and by sending them to their deaths in the execution chambers of the Lubianka OGPU headquarters in Moscow.

Though his position is probably as secure today as it can be, Vishinsky continues to play the rôle of a lick-spittle. His speeches are totally lacking in originality of thought or expression, but they are masterly expositions of the sacred Stalinist dogmas. They abound in abject glorification of Stalin's infinite wisdom and genius. At international gatherings, whenever he stands beside Molotov, his immediate superior in the Foreign Ministry, he carefully retreats a pace in token of respect. He is generally seen

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in public wearing a fixed smile on his florid countenance — which is not so much a sign of geniality as the result of almost three decades of self-discipline in the rôle of Soviet Russia's most accomplished sycophant.

II

Far from boasting a pedigreed proletarian background, Vishinsky is the only member of the Soviet inner circle with a drop of blue blood in his veins. The family's genealogical chart reveals that a Vishinsky dwelling in Austrian Galicia was dubbed Baron of the Holy Roman Empire in 1782 by the reigning Austrian monarch, Francis II. This title was later confirmed by Tsar Nicholas I in the case of another branch of the family settled in the Ukrainian province of Volhynia. However, Andrei Vishinsky's immediate forebears remained free of the aristocratic taint.

Andrei Yanuarevich was born in Kiev on December 10, 1883, the son of a pharmacist. He received his grade schooling in Baku and Kiev, achieving meanwhile something of a name as a self-assured young dandy. While still a schoolboy, he began his courtship of Kapitolina Mikhailova, a local beauty, who later became his wife.

Vishinsky enrolled at the law school of the University of Kiev in 1901, at a time when Russia was seething with revolutionary discontent. Students, professors, writers, engineers and lawyers — intellectuals of every description — threw themselves frenziedly into the all-pervading passion

for political agitation, braving imprisonment, exile and often the gallows. Youthful Andrei was unable to resist the fever for long, and he suffered expulsion from the university as the price of participation in a student movement. In 1903, he entered the ranks of the Menshevik faction which had emerged as a result of the recent rupture in the Social Democratic party.

The Revolution of 1905 swiftly transformed Vishinsky from theoretician to practicing revolutionist. This first and only direct contact with the mechanics of political upheaval proved a painful one, however. For his part in organizing the general railroad strike he was tried and condemned to one year of detention in a fortress.

Not even the diligent research of Party historians has been able to turn up further instances of revolutionary activity with which to embellish Vishinsky's official biography. Communist glamorizers point reverentially to an alleged attempt on his life in 1907. If it actually took place, however, its only effect seems to have been to dampen noticeably his revolutionary zeal; for he was a prodigy of law-abiding respectability in the entire decade which followed.

Returning to the university which had ousted him several years earlier, he took up the life of a law student once more, concentrating on criminal law and procedure. In 1913, after twelve years of intermittent study, he graduated and moved to Baku to establish a legal practice. Here and in

Moscow, in the years preceding the Revolution, barrister Vishinsky appears to have been rather less than a conspicuous success. Existing accounts picture him as an obscure lawyer, barely eking out a living.

Nevertheless, Vishinsky was an early beneficiary of the revolution of February 1917, which replaced the Romanovs with a democratic left-wing government and brought him an appointment as commissar of a Moscow administrative district. By the time of the Communist uprising in Petrograd in October, he had identified himself with the right wing of the revolutionary movement by violently assailing the Bolsheviks. Indeed, his only reason for dissatisfaction with the provisional government, during this period, sprang from his belief that, if anything, it was tending too far to the left.

Late in 1918, the collapse of the German Army gave rise to an anti-monarchical revolution which speedily lost whatever proletarian character it might have had and resulted in the creation of a moderate bourgeois republic. In Soviet Russia, however, Bolshevik dialecticians took care to represent the events in Germany as further evidence of the rapidly dawning worldwide Communist millennium. Devout Bolsheviks thought they could see the emerging outlines of an invincible partnership which would harness German industrial efficiency to the untapped wealth of Russia for the greater glory of the Communist ideal. The apparent les-

sons of Germany were not lost upon Vishinsky, and for the first time he began to think seriously of deserting his allegiance to the increasingly less influential forces which favored gradual change.

Despite his awakening realization that he was backing the wrong horse, he accompanied a group of Mensheviks to Tula in the summer of 1919 to exhort the workers to greater valor in the face of the White armies advancing from the South. Beside the inspired oratory of the others, his own efforts proved humdrum and pedestrian.¹ Back in Moscow in a disgruntled humor, he continued to debate the advantages of the various contesting factions. At one point, with the Red Army embroiled on countless fronts and the Soviet state seemingly marked for imminent extinction, he is said to have contemplated availing himself of his Polish ancestry to apply for Polish citizenship. But by 1920 he had resolved all his doubts, and applied for membership in the Bolshevik party. He was immediately accepted.

III

Once he was in the party fold, Vishinsky's rise was not a meteoric one. The inevitable backlog of suspicion against the Menshevik turncoat could be neutralized only by years of slavish ideological orthodoxy and good works for the new faith. For eight years he traveled from pillar to post. From

¹ David Dallin, who led the group to Tula and is now well known in the United States, has stated that, as a speaker, Vishinsky was singularly unimpressive.

positions in the Commissariat of Food and the Commissariat of Education and Justice he shifted to public prosecutor of the Criminal Board of the Supreme Tribunal of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. Later, he was named Professor of Criminal Procedure at Moscow University, then dean and president of the University, member of the Board of Education of the RSFSR and director of the Central Vocational Training Department.

In 1928 Vishinsky suddenly came into his own. He was charged with prosecuting a group of engineers accused of applying deliberate slow-down techniques in operating the Shakhty coal mines in the Ukraine. Hurling verbal thunderbolts, Jove-like, at the cringing foes of the fatherland, he demonstrated that he was almost more Stalinist than Stalin.

Five years later, the Soviet government staged its next all-star judicial extravaganza. The villains of the piece, in this instance, were a group of British engineers of the Metropolitan Vickers Electrical Company employed in Leningrad, together with their alleged Russian confederates. The charge was espionage and sabotage. To Vishinsky, the master showman, was assigned the task of bringing the foreign infidels and their minions to justice. In a concluding speech which ran just shy of eight hours, he hissed at, reviled and badgered accused and witnesses without distinction. "So far as this country is concerned," he told the Britishers, "your

only use would be to manure the soil of our Soviet fields."

Eventually, a deal consummated with the British government spared the defendants this ignoble end; but not before Vishinsky had had ample opportunity to display his fanaticism, resourcefulness and forensic skill to advantage. At the same time, he perfected the prosecution technique which was to become his hallmark in future performances — the use of psychological devices and pressures to extort confessions of crimes never actually committed.

In the sensational Moscow trials which began three years later, these methods received full application. Opinions vary as to the exact procedures used to induce the prisoners to admit to conspiracies, murders and acts of sabotage of such magnitude as to insult any rational person's credulity. In some cases, reduced sentences were undoubtedly offered in return for blood-curdling confessions of guilt. In others, the desire to shield helpless families or even rooted habits of party discipline prompted the victims to fall in with the scheme. At all events, once the trial was under way the various defendants engaged in an inelegant race to incriminate one another and themselves. Prosecutor and accused worked together, in a manner suggestive of a skilled orchestra responding to its conductor's every deft motion of the baton. Only once did a hitch develop. Defendant Krestinsky, a former Ambassador to Germany, threw the court into an uproar

by retracting his pre-trial confession and declaring it had been obtained under duress. He was hurried out of the courtroom and, after a suitable period of suasion in his cell, returned to the stand, whereupon he recanted his last statement and poured forth a catalogue of misconduct sufficient to convict a dozen men.

Throughout most of the testimony, Vishinsky catechized the condemned men in the following fashion:

VISHINSKY: What appraisal should be given the articles and statements you wrote in 1933, in which you expressed loyalty to the Party. Deception?

DEFENDANT (KAMENEV): No, worse than deception!

VISHINSKY: Perfidy?

KAMENEV: Worse!

VISHINSKY: Worse than deception; more than perfidy — would the word be treason?

KAMENEV: You have found the word!

Others anticipated the prosecutor by claiming responsibility for crimes not cited in the indictment.

The list of prisoners in the dock at the Moscow trials reads like the roll of honor of the Bolshevik Revolution. With the exception of a handful of Stalin's devoted flunkies like Molotov and Zhdanov, the pillars of Soviet society were arraigned at the bar like common criminals. Premier Rykov, Ambassador to Britain Sokolnikov, Ambassador to Germany Krestinsky, Party ideologist Pyatakov, Lenin's favorite, Bukharin, and his early companions in arms, Kamenev and Zinoviev, were but a few of those damned for unspeakable crimes. For

Vishinsky, the act of crucifying these men meant swallowing every scruple to indulge in the rankest sort of hypocritical betrayal. A decade earlier, in his juridical writings, he had called respectful attention to the "magnificent and profoundly true words" and "exact formulations" of Zinoviev, Bukharin and Kamenev. Now he unblinkingly hurled obscene abuse at them as he sealed their doom. Similar treatment was meted out to Krylenko, who had preceded Vishinsky as Public Prosecutor of the USSR, serving until the latter's appointment in 1935, and who had joined him in authorship of a *Course on Criminal Procedure*.

In seeking to square the Moscow trials with their consciences, apologists for the Soviet régime run full tilt into an almost insuperable dilemma.

On the one hand, the uncanny co-operation between prosecution and accused, coupled with Krestinsky's startling reversal of testimony, justify the presumption that the trial was rigged from start to finish. Occasional garish contradictions and lapses in the testimony lend color to this belief. At one point, for example, one of the accused, Holtzman, was alleged to have met Trotsky's son, Leon Sedov, at the Hotel Bristol in Copenhagen in 1932. Yet no hotel of that name existed at the time. In another instance, the prosecution case hinged upon an air journey from Berlin to Oslo in December 1935. Later investigation in Oslo disclosed that no for-

eign aircraft had landed at the airfield during the month in question.²

On the other hand, if one accept the verdict of the court and assume that most of the Bolshevik "Old Guard" were guilty as charged, it is very much in order to question the worth of a government which for two decades was controlled by men of such incredible depravity. The most plausible explanation is that the accused were guilty only in the sense that *any* expression of dissent was tantamount to high treason under an absolute despotism which makes blind conformity synonymous with loyalty. Still faithful to the Communist ideal by their own lights, they may well have been incensed by what they regarded as the steady perversion of that ideal by the Stalinist clique in power. Patently, Stalin could not permit the issue to be drawn on a basis of purely intra-party ideological dissension. He would have no guarantee that the opposition would not be able to present a more convincing case than his own. Consequently, a flamboyant tale of espionage and foreign intrigue had to be concocted.

For the leading part he played in this masterly piece of skulduggery, Prosecutor Vishinsky was handsomely

rewarded. In rapid succession, he obtained two orders of Lenin, appointments as director of the Institute of Law of the Academy of Sciences and editor of the magazine *Soviet State and Law*, election to the Supreme Soviet and the Party central committee, designation as chairman of the committee on constitutional revision, and, for good measure, a monetary prize of 200,000 rubles.

IV

In the intervals between his inquisitorial duties, Vishinsky's talents have been pressed into service to provide the theoretical basis for the current Soviet concept of law and the State. In 1917, the Bolsheviks had ridden to power on the strength of a number of dynamic slogans calculated to attract the masses by their incessant thumping on such subjects as a separate peace with Germany, immediate parcelling out of the landed estates and, in general, the expropriation of the expropriators. In essence, the October Revolution had represented a reaction against organized authority bordering almost on outright anarchy. In his *State and Revolution*, Lenin had sought to supply a moral and theoretical foundation for the seizure of power by denying the validity not only of the State, but of law itself. Every law, so the reasoning ran, presupposed inequality and special privilege. Hence law would now "wither away."

Within a very short time, this doctrine was rendered obsolete. The most obtuse Soviet subject could see

² I can testify from personal knowledge to the utter falsity of one charge made during the last of the three trials. *Pravda* for March 8, 1938 contained the information that Bukharin, while on the stand, had admitted establishing contact with "a foreign organization of Social Revolutionaries centered about such persons as Mark Vishniak, the General Secretary of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly." I stated categorically at the time, as I do today, that the meeting of the Constituent Assembly on January 18, 1918 was the only occasion on which I ever saw Bukharin.

that the State was constantly solidifying its power, instead of surrendering it. By the same token, law was not being scrapped, but rather maintained and expanded into a new Soviet legislative code. To Vishinsky, as Russia's leading legal authority, was assigned the task of rationalizing these inconsistencies. This he did by adroitly shifting the emphasis from the worthlessness of law and state power in general to the worthlessness of bankrupt bourgeois law and state power alone. "Everywhere in the world," he observed mournfully, "those in power violate the law and individual rights." However, "there is one country where, like pure gold, justice is sparkling. That is the USSR."

Law was now no longer something to be abridged and watered down until it disappeared altogether. Soviet law, in its embodiment, the Soviet state, was unquestionably the most perfect instrument for the administration of justice which man, in his frailty, could devise. Therefore, it deserved to be reinforced to the maximum extent, the more so while Russia continued to be hemmed in from all sides by ravening capitalist beasts of prey. Loyalty to the State now took precedence over everything.

The now-celebrated law of August, 1932 governing the "conservation of socialist property" gave concrete application to the new dictum. Vishinsky bellwethered the propaganda campaign extolling the "world-wide historic importance" of this fantastic decree, which provided capital punish-

ment or terms in forced labor camps for injury or theft of "socialist property" — a term which, in view of the almost universal nationalization of industrial and landed property, necessarily included just about everything except personal belongings. Even children of twelve and over were later made liable for infractions of the new ruling. Under its provisions, kicking a pig became a criminal offense; a cook on a collective farm who failed to salt the dinner properly was prosecuted for "failure to perform official duties"; and an individual on another farm who sold a quantity of rye in town for 23 rubles instead of obtaining a better price was convicted for "poor salesmanship."

The doctrine of State omnipotence was also particularly useful in stilling any possible outcry, at home or abroad, against the wholesale massacre of Stalin's political foes in the middle thirties. Vishinsky minced no words in openly defending the policy of legalized extermination of the opposition, contending that the State could do no wrong in rubbing out class enemies who were conspiring to bring about its downfall.

V

Since the end of the Moscow trials, which seem to have effectively cowed any lingering anti-Stalinist opposition, Vishinsky has plied a new trade — that of roving master diplomatist. To this he fails to bring some of the usual diplomat's traveling accessories — suave address, a cultured man-

ner and easy eloquence when the occasion demands it. His oratorical offerings run to verbosity, and he is prone to indulge in caustic personal attacks and downright vulgarity.

Vishinsky's chief qualification as diplomat is his ability to dissemble his own thoughts and argue with tenacity on behalf of the official line handed to him from above. In addition, his educational background is far superior to that of most Soviet leaders. Not one of the fourteen members of the Politbureau possesses a university degree as does he.

In 1940, when Russia occupied the three Baltic states and then staged a dummy plebiscite to legitimize their incorporation into the USSR, Vishinsky was on hand in Latvia to supervise the proceedings. In the same year, he was made a Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, the post he still holds. During the war, he sat in on the conferences at Moscow, Yalta and Potsdam; and, from the end of 1943 until March 1944 he represented Russia on the Allied Advisory Council on Italy. As Germany's Balkan satellites started to drop out of the war, Vishinsky took over as general overseer to help gather them to Mother Russia's bosom. In March 1945, when Rumania's first post-armistice premier failed to toe the line, Vishinsky was the man Stalin chose to set matters right. After a brief but tempestuous interview with youthful King Michael, a new and properly docile government was installed which has kept Rumania in the Soviet bloc ever since.

Vishinsky made his début amid the capitalist fleshpots of the West early in 1946, when he journeyed to London as chief Soviet delegate to the first session of the United Nations General Assembly. Tensely expectant Londoners, prepared for a wild-eyed, bewhiskered Bolshevik of the old school, were somewhat taken aback when a stocky, red-faced, white-haired man, dressed like a respectable burgher and wearing tortoise-shell glasses, mounted the podium. Their relieved astonishment was short-lived, however, as Vishinsky launched into scathing denunciation of the "diabolical crimes" of those who disagreed with him, in the manner of a prosecutor confronting prisoners at the bar. The same tone dominated his more recent "war-mongering" tirades at Lake Success and Flushing Meadow against periodicals like *Newsweek*, newspapers like the New York *Herald Tribune*, and columnists like Walter Winchell.

Several months ago, Vishinsky uttered this remarkable definition: "In Russia, our régime is a dictatorial democracy—a sort of twentieth-century version of what used to be called a benevolent despotism." To those familiar with Soviet "benevolence" in all its refinements, Vishinsky's prowess at the Moscow trials should establish him as one of its leading exponents. But his monumental bad manners and addiction to noisy name-calling make his value as salesman for the new "democracy" extremely doubtful.

THE SKEPTICS' CORNER

by BERGEN EVANS



That a man is obliged to save a life if he can

The detached and philosophic citizen is at perfect liberty to watch a fellow citizen drown or get run over or eat a poisoned lollipop without offering so much as a warning. Humanitarians may condemn, but the law cannot undertake to define what shall constitute each man's pursuit of happiness.

There are those, however — such as policemen on duty, parents at all times, and lifeguards during their working hours — who have, in the terms of the statute, “a legal duty to act” and hence can be prosecuted for not acting. Furthermore their responsibility is automatically assumed by anyone who renders it impossible for them to act. Thus a cautious bather on the beach has no legal obligation to assist an incautious bather in the water. But if the bather on the beach should, in a spasm of zeal, seize the lifeguard's boat and set out to the rescue, thus depriving the lifeguard of his power to act, he has assumed the

lifeguard's responsibility, and if he should lose his nerve and turn back or allow himself to be diverted, let us say, by some more attractive bather than the one he set out to assist, he can be held liable for the consequences.

That there are love drugs

That there are spells and medicines bought of mountebanks “by which the property of youth and maidhood may be abus'd” has been believed by more fathers than Desdemona's. And is still. Thus when Miss Mary Virginia Kimblerly, of Columbus, Ohio, a twenty-year-old college girl, ran off with Mr. Robert Hemming, a 42-year-old ex-convict, and announced publicly that she was enjoying herself and had no intention of returning home, her father, a professor at Ohio State University, was quoted as saying “If that is true, I am convinced that my daughter has been doped.”

Love, which is more in need of sedatives than stimulants, has from

the most ancient times been believed to be produceable by various drugs and foods. Indeed, there is hardly an article of human diet that has not at some time or place been hopefully regarded as an aphrodisiac. But despite the flourishing illicit sale of many charms and concoctions it is doubted that there is such a thing. Alcohol and opium seem to lessen inhibitions and let nature take her course. Cantharides (Spanish fly) is thought to be infallible. But it is a dangerous, often fatal, vesicant, and the feelings it arouses bear about the same relation to love as those engendered by stomach ulcers do to hunger.

That an emotional shock can cause the hair to "turn white overnight"

The belief that excessive grief or fear can turn the hair white "overnight" is one of literature's most valued possessions. It lends emphasis to anecdote and dignifies the sorrowing great of history.

Marie Antoinette and Mary Queen of Scots are both said to have turned white on the way to the scaffold. Henry IV, "troubled by the prospect of war," we are told, "put his head in his hands to meditate on his sorrows" and, lo, when he looked up, his mustache had turned white! It took but the one awful day in which he descended into the maelstrom to turn Poe's hero's hair "from a jetty black to white." Prisoners who have been denied parole, mothers who

have seen their children die, those who have seen ghosts and others who have experienced similar shocks have all been reported as "turning white overnight."

Modern "authentic" instances are not lacking. Emile Gavreau, on p. 70 of his autobiography, *My Last Million Readers*, says that as a young editor, aged 27, he closed the AP wires in order to save money, even though he knew that news of the armistice was due any minute. It was a decision involving great strain and when he went to shave the next morning he noticed "touches of gray at the temples." Undaunted by this warning, however, he continued the strenuous career of an editor of tabloids until, in the space of eight or ten years, his hair had turned "iron gray."

Lowell Thomas, in *Men of Danger*, quotes Frank Crennen "one of the leading experts in starting the lungs to work after they've stopped," who had actually *seen* hair turn white "before his eyes," as they say. Once as a lifeguard he had worked seven hours on a man who had been pronounced dead by four doctors. "His hair gradually turned white while we were working over him. . . . It was an uncanny thing to watch." Unfortunately, it has been impossible to get in touch with Mr. Crennen to make further inquiries; in some unaccountable manner he has dropped out of sight. Drs. Barahal and Freeman report an instance of a soldier's hair turning white overnight in a

recent issue of the *Psychiatric Quarterly* (vol. 20, 1946). But their main evidence was the soldier's word, as he did not come under their care until some months after the alleged blanching.

Delicacy — or, perhaps, the nature of the transference — usually limits the change to capital hair. But not always. Augustus W. Addinsell, Assistant Physician at the London Temperance [*n.b.!*] Hospital reported, in the *British Medical Journal* for May 17, 1902, a remarkable case of a woman who while menstruating had the misfortune of witnessing a murder: the victim, a woman whose throat was cut, fell dead at her feet. The next morning, Addinsell states, "the whole of the hair of the pubes on the right side was pure white while that of the left remained dark."

A number of explanations of the assumed phenomenon have been advanced.

Of these theories the only one that has received any serious scientific hearing is the claim, in Dr. Barahal's words, that "Shock, rage and fear cause the appearance in the skin of histamine-like substances which reduce the surface tension and produce a result in the hair similar to the process in 'bends,' that is, the liberation of the dissolved gases, nitrogen and oxygen" into the hair in minute bubbles whose refraction gives the hair its "whiteness." One drawback is that no one yet, including Dr. Barahal — who frankly admits it — has ever seen such "lacunules" or

"vacuoles" as they have been variously termed.

The anti-blanchers simply say the thing is impossible, hair being an inert excrescence. Dr. R. M. Strong of the Vanderbilt University Medical School pursued the subject with special interest for many years, never saw an authentic case, never heard of one that seemed authentic to him and concluded that it was "improbable," adding that "no method by which it could take place" was known to him. Drs. Sutton and Sutton, in their monumental *Diseases of the Skin* (1939) state that "Sudden, overnight blanching, reliably reported, is doubtless the result of the removal of cosmetic coloration or the application of a bleach, Physiological and anatomical facts are incompatible with the possibility of actual, nonartificial, instant blanching."

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* concludes editorially that "reports of sudden blanching of the hair must be regarded as inherently improbable."

That it is a good thing to "flush out" the system

While it is essential to replace the fluid lost from the body of a sweating feverish patient and necessary to maintain a free flow of urine when such a drug as sulphonamide — capable, in too great concentration, of damaging the kidneys — is given, it is a mistake to force fluid upon patients, with or without fever, in the hope of thereby

"eliminating toxins." "The conception of the body as some sort of involved water-closet, to be cleaned by flushing," writes Dr. John R. Forbes in the *Lancet*, "is quite out of date." "We have given up belaboring the colon with purgatives and douches," he adds, "and the sweat glands with diaphoretics and hot baths in the quixotic battle against elusive toxins. It is time that the kidneys were rescued from similar assaults, and the patient allowed to sleep undisturbed."

Dr. Forbes' "we," of course, includes only the intelligent vanguard of his profession. Many physicians and most laymen retain their faith in ritual purgation. It is still the rule, rather than the exception, in household medication to further inflame irritated intestines by a dose of salts or castor oil. There is a mystical faith that in liver complaints "a free flow of bile" should be stimulated by epsom salts, a faith, says Dr. Forbes, "based on ancient misconceptions" of physiology and anatomy. And every American city has establishments that administer "hyper-colonic irrigations" to thousands of weird cultists who have become jaded with the deleterious delights of ordinary enemas.

That mares have been impregnated by the wind

The 1947 *Old Farmer's Almanac* reports as "incredible but nevertheless true" that on Mount Tagnus in Portugal "mares are sometimes impregnated by the wind." They got

this remarkable information from Fairfax Harrison's *Roman Farm Management* and Mr. Harrison could have had it from Pliny, Vergil or St. Augustine. Plutarch thought that birds might be impregnated in the same manner. If so, the Wahoo Bird, of college scatology, would be especially vulnerable.

It is curious that these spermy winds should be localized in this one spot for so many centuries — a spot, by the way, within the horse latitudes.

Some have felt that women are confronted with the same danger or opportunity. Guttmacher quotes one Abraham Johnson who believed so devoutly that children were developed from "floating animacula" in the air that he wanted a law passed forbidding copulation for one year in order that his theory might have a fair trial.

That "the unwritten law" is a sure defense

Only in the state of Texas is a man permitted by statute to kill his wife's lover. Elsewhere he runs the risk, slight to be sure, of an unsympathetic jury.

That this statute should exist only in the Lone Star State where the men are notoriously virile and the women magnificently loyal is slightly puzzling. It obviously has no significance to Texans and must, therefore, be intended to encourage newcomers to conform to the local standards or, perhaps, to attract the tourist trade.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

BY MATTHEW HUTTNER

BETWEEN brotherly Philadelphia and the belching blast furnaces of Pittsburgh are 280 of the most diverse miles in the world. It is an impressive journey by any route. Moving westward along the aristocratic Main Line you cross the wheat and tobacco-crowned lands of Lancaster County, skirt the factory-laden Lehigh Valley, climb over the washboard Appalachian Mountains, 2800 feet high, then wind slowly down into western Pennsylvania, the industrial citadel of the nation, famous for steel, coal, glass and the density of its blanketing smog.

Along and away from this kaleidoscopic road live Pennsylvania's ten millions. They have an amazing and colorful variety of occupations, dialects and ways of living. From the wildly beautiful Wissahickon to the placid Perkiomen, from the brick houses and narrow streets of southern towns to the spacious lawns and white frame houses of the north — the whole state is a blending of opposites. The smug superiority of Chestnut Hill and the rugged earthiness of

the mining towns; the back-country reaches of the Southern Appalachians, where dour inhabitants distill their own "corn-likker" and view the "furriner" with suspicion, and the millionaire estates of Germantown and Fox Chapel, where socialites haunt country clubs and ride to hounds.

Even Pennsylvania's two great cities, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, are in different worlds. Pittsburgh is an industrial cauldron, the cradle of the labor movement. It rings with baronic names — Carnegie, Schwab, the Mellons and Frick. It moves, cusses and downs hard liquor at a terrific rate and has produced some of the best known gridiron heroes in history. Philadelphia, the first capital of the United States, clings to pomp and privilege, to cotillions, cricket and the quaint "thee and thou." It is the home of scapple, the Liberty Bell and the *Saturday Evening Post*, of clubs so select that even the Cabots would be suspect. Philadelphia has always been Republican, Pittsburgh Democratic. Politically the two cities have one thing in common. Both

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have been notoriously boss-ridden.

Eight out of every ten commodities contain steel, and Pennsylvania produces nearly half the nation's tonnage. The state is sprinkled with great steel fortresses — Cambria, Johnstown, Lackawanna and Phoenixville; Steelton, Lebanon, Coatesville and Midvale and, of course, Bethlehem, seat of Little Steel and “union-hater” Eugene Grace. Pittsburgh is the home of Big Steel. Here you will find U. S. Steel, the world's largest corporation, with its Horatio-Alger-like President, Benjamin J. Fairless, who rose from miner's son to magnate. Here countless river barges and rail cars haul ore, coke and limestone into monster mills that roll out 20 million tons of steel ingots a year — more than the capacities of Great Britain, Germany, Japan, France and the Soviet Union combined. Here John L. Lewis and Philip Murray carved out their powerful labor empires, and here too you will hear the legend of Joe Magarac — the Hungarian Hercules who could make 2000 tons of steel a day and, when he felt good, could stop a locomotive single-handed.

One out of every ten American industrial workers gets his pay check in Pennsylvania. There are more jobs here than in all the states between the Mississippi and the Sierra Nevada combined. One reason for this frenzied industry is Power; power to lead the world in the production of aluminum, to outstrip all others in the production of glass; power to operate a gigantic mill like Jones & Laughlin's,

where a strip of steel 96 inches wide and 3600 feet long rolls out as fast as newspapers from a modern press. In an ordinary year, Pennsylvania's coal, oil, gas and water power together produce four and a half *quadrillion* BTUs, which is 20 per cent of the entire nation's power output. No other state can touch that figure.

Another big reason is Pennsylvania's rich natural resources. Within its 45,123 square miles there is an enormous mineral wealth. All the nation's anthracite comes from an area 484 miles square around Scranton. In bituminous only West Virginia ranks higher. Name a metal and Pennsylvania has it — lead, zinc, feldspar, magnetite, nickel, copper, tungsten and asbestos; kaolin, fluospar, cyanite and a dozen more. It has precious stones such as garnet, beryl and amethyst; gold and even radium extracted from carnotite. It can be argued that coal, coal tar, pig iron, ferro-alloys, sand, stone, cement, coke, slate, sulfuric acid and petroleum are the raw stuff of civilization. Pennsylvania leads the Union in the production of all of them except petroleum, and even here it has some distinction. Pennsylvania crude is the most sought after of oil bases.

Agriculturally the state is no less blessed. Its 170,000 farms add up to a billion-dollar industry. Every important American commercial crop except citrus fruits and peanuts can be found in abundance, and more vegetables are harvested in Pennsylvania than in all of New England.

Below the congested anthracite district there is farmland as productive as any in America. Lancaster County is second nationally in the value of its produce; year after year bumper crops of corn, wheat, potatoes and tobacco roll away from the pin-neat homesteads of the Quakers and Pennsylvania Dutch. Adams County is noted for its apples, Lehigh and Potter for potatoes; Franklin for peaches and the Lake Erie section for grapes. In value of milk and cream retailed Pennsylvania ranks first. Its farmers rank among the highest in cash income; it has more owner-operated farms than almost any other state. Here is countryside without the hard stony subsoil of New England, and without the droughts and disasters of the dust-clogged West.

All these impressive statistics aside, Pennsylvania is the home of Stetson hats and Talon zippers, of Wearever aluminum and Berkshire nylons. The last train you rode on was probably a Budd or an ACF; the last mirror you looked into was probably Pittsburgh Plate. Jack Frost sugar, Old Overholt rye, Piper Cubs and Hershey Chocolate all come from Pennsylvania, as do more shirts, stockings, knitted underwear, lace goods, linoleum, rayon yarn and thread than any other state can produce.

II

Pennsylvania was named the Keystone State because of its strategic position. It is a bridge between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean,

the crossroads of a vast interior traffic. Philadelphia, by way of Delaware Bay, is the nation's second seaport; Pittsburgh, 400 miles from the ocean, handles more tonnage than any other port in the world. The state is flushed by three great watersheds: the Delaware in the east, the Susquehanna in the middle and the Allegheny-Monongahela to the west. I learned to swim in the Monongahela amidst pollution and paddle-wheel steamers. In those days you weren't a man until you caught the first buster of a paddle-wheeler without capsizing your canoe or dived into the river from Belle Vernon Bridge, about 80 feet above.

From the top of Mt. Davis, at 3213 feet, to the low lake level of Erie, the state runs an exhilarating and picturesque gamut. You can roam through seventeen historical parks, 27 recreation areas, ten natural monuments and a hundred caves. There is the scenic beauty of the famed Appalachian trail, the awe-inspiring panorama of Bald Eagle Lookout, the "Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania" at Pine Creek Gorge and, of course, Altoona's amazing Horseshoe Curve. The state is wonderful for sportsmen too. There are over 22,000 miles of streams stocked with 160 different varieties of fish. Half of Pennsylvania is sheer forest. Amidst hardwood and hemlock you can bag not only deer, bear, grouse and pheasant but practically any gamebird and furbearing animal I can think of at the moment. In a

recent season the state issued licenses to some 700,000 hunters, paid bounties for 8032 gray foxes and 16,509 weasels. Another year, 200,000 deer were shot *just to thin them out!*

A trip through Pennsylvania recalls unforgettable events like Lincoln at Gettysburg, Washington trapped at Fort Mifflin, again at Brandywine and crossing the Delaware. It brings to mind heroines Betsy Ross and Molly Pitcher, the burial shrine of General Braddock and Daniel Boone, born near Baumstown. The town of Wyoming is the site of a bloody Indian massacre, South Fork dam is all that remains of the tragic Johnstown Flood and Asylum is the quaint French spot to which Marie Antoinette hoped to flee. The nation's first pharmacy, first golf course, first oil-producing well; its largest railroad shops, college building and art colony — they are all in Pennsylvania.

The Dutch and Swedes were the first white settlers, but the state's formation began with that great English Quaker, William Penn, who arrived in 1682. King Charles II owed Penn some £16,000 which he couldn't repay. So he granted his subject the territory of what is now Pennsylvania and Delaware. Penn wanted to name it New Wales but, of all people, a Welsh Councilman objected. They finally settled for "Pennsylvania" because of the magnificent woods. All Penn had to pay for his vast domain was two beaver skins a year to the king or his heirs and a fifth of all the

gold and silver ore "which shall from time to time happen to be found."

The American nation was born on the soil of Pennsylvania. The first Continental Congress met in Philadelphia; the Declaration of Independence was framed there. The crisis of the Revolution was passed at Valley Forge; at York the Articles of Confederation were adopted. A widowed Philadelphia seamstress by the name of Betsy Ross sewed together our first Stars and Stripes and from that same city of Brotherly Love emerged our most cherished legal document, the Constitution of the United States.

III

People think of New York City as the original melting pot, but it was really Pennsylvania. Welsh, Scotch-Irish, English, French, Germans, Finns, Italians, Spanish, Hungarians, Russians, Poles, Czechs, Moravians and a dozen other Slav groups — from all over Europe, and even Asia, immigrants poured into Pennsylvania, drawn by the spirit of religious tolerance and the phenomenal industrial development. So many of the towns are like Charleroi, where I grew up — a German-American Turnverein next door to our house, a Sons of Italy lodge across the street, a Sokols Hall a few blocks away. And many an Irishman and Jew belonged to all three. I can remember the Russian Orthodox, St. Jerome's Catholic, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Lutheran, Spiritualist, Seventh-Day Adventist, Episcopal, Baptist, Negro, Presbyteri-

an, Christian, and Methodist Churches and a Jewish Synagogue. An Armistice Day parade in tiny Charleroi brings out more of America than it will in a flock of cities the size of Indianapolis.

Heralded as "America's most substantial citizens," the Quakers gave the state its liberal frame of government, fought for universal education and led in the movement to abolish war and slavery. Clustered around Philadelphia (still their sanctum), they waxed prosperous and powerful, founded topnotch schools like Swarthmore, Bryn Mawr and Haverford and dominated business and politics. In a few rural sections the Quaker gray habit is still evident, and some Friends consider it a bad omen to move into a new house on "Sixth Day" (Friday). There are still Quaker farmers who pocket a horse chestnut to cure rheumatism, plant crops by the moon and use a divining rod to find water. But only a few. Time and intermarriage have weaned them away from their unusual Quaker customs, have made them a people indistinguishable.

On the other hand, the Germans, or Pennsylvania Dutch, as they are called, are the most homogeneous and clannish group in the state. Sectarian, superstitious, oddly civilized, their prime concern is hard work and the accumulation of property. They are accomplished artisans and superb farmers; in magnificence their barns are unsurpassed. Mostly they live around Lancaster, in small towns and hamlets with piquant names like Bird-in-Hand and Paradise, Fertility and

Intercourse. Their culture stems from a unique language, the famous *schoenste lengevitich* (still taught at Franklin and Marshall College). They cook food which is delicious — *Schwenkfelder* bread, *Fasnachts-Kuechleus* and the rich *Lebkuchen*.

The number of Dutch sects seems endless: there are sixteen different kinds of Mennonites, Moravians, Dunkards, Amish, Seventh-Day Adventists, River Brethren, Weinbrennairians, Brinsers, Widerdeifers and heaven-only-knows how many kinds of Lutheran, Reformed and Baptist Churchmen. Altogether they are called the Plain People because of their dress. Mennonite men wear plain black frock coats and large black hats; the women, black dresses and bonnets. Other sects prefer brown. The bearded Amish cling to a harsh homespun garb devoid of buttons. They are probably the most unusual, frugal, God-fearing souls in the country, their religion forbidding them to use mechanical devices of any kind. It seems incredible that only 50 miles from the flaming forges of Bethlehem are rich Amish homes lacking even radios and vacuum cleaners.

Some of the plain sects still practice river baptism and foot washing. Wedding couples are serenaded both before and after the honeymoon and everybody down to the fourth cousins attends funerals and eats a sumptuous dinner afterwards. On Easter sunrise the Moravian cemetery ritual features a weird trombone choir. The pomegranates of Solomon's Temple

are painted for luck on household articles and water from the baptismal bowl is thrown over a dooryard rose-bush to assure that the child will have rosy cheeks.

To many of these folk, particularly the back-hill Dutch, the supernatural looms as large as life itself. Powwow doctors still exist, as do witches and *Hexerei*. Within the past fifteen years several cases of murder have been traced to the Hex cult. Members of this cult believe that witches can kill cattle by feeding them pellets of hair, that they have the power to change men into horses. When a cow is thought to be bewitched it is branded on the forehead. If the bewitched animal dies it is cremated in the belief that the witch will thereby be placed under a spell. To cure a disease inflicted by witchcraft, a drawing of the persecutor is made upon a stump and shot at with a silver bullet. Books on powwow and other mysterious hex arts fill the book stores, evidence of the credulity that persists in parts of Pennsylvania's hinterland.

IV

In its concern for the popular good and welfare, Pennsylvania has the usual woes of a packed, industrial state. Social evils are concentrated in the steel and coal regions, where disease, slums and corruption are everyday affairs. Last year in Uniontown, narcotics agents made one of the biggest marihuana hauls ever made in the country. During the war Army officials threatened to declare

the state capital, Harrisburg, off bounds because of the high venereal disease rate. Pittsburgh and its environs condone one of the most notorious string of "cat houses" in the nation: not long ago they were exposed by *Collier's*. In the Wierton section of Monessen, directly across the street from the mill where I worked, there were four of these houses side by side. It is no exaggeration to say that on pay-nights the men actually lined up outside.

Needless to say, the setup was police-protected.

Until John L. Lewis and the UMW did a thorough cleanup job, many of the mining towns defied description. Families of twelve shared squalid two-room huts. Incest and illiteracy were not uncommon. One village in my neighborhood had only one quagmire of a road leading in and out. The miners could trade at the company store and no place else: they were paid entirely in scrip and were forever in debt. A miner considered himself lucky if, at the end of two back-breaking weeks, there were fifty cents left to go to the Saturday night shindig and forget it all.

Such oppressive conditions were, fertile ground for labor organization. Both the AFL and the CIO were Pennsylvania born. Their march to power was a grim and bloody struggle. A few years before the AFL organized at Pittsburgh in 1881, the secret society of Molly Maguires had given labor a black eye by a series of cold-blooded murders in the anthracite

region. At Homestead, in 1892, steel strikers fought a disastrous pitched battle with company guards. The years between then and the evolution of the CIO's Steel Workers Organizing Committee under ex-miner Philip Murray saw an incessant struggle of lockouts, strikes, blacklists and boycotts. Finally, on March 1, 1937, Big Steel and the SWOC agreed to collective bargaining, the 40-hour week and a sizable wage rise. After a tragic massacre at South Chicago, the insistence of the NLRB and the advent of World War II, labor-nemesis Eugene L. Grace of Bethlehem and Little Steel signed too. Today the SWOC is called "the most adult labor organization in the country" and Pittsburgh's Philip Murray "probably the most seasoned of contemporary American labor leaders."

No CIO union will refuse membership to a Negro, a tiptoe on Pennsylvania's historic tolerance toward the black man. The first abolitionist society in America was formed in Philadelphia in 1775. Quakers and Pennsylvania Dutch figured spectacularly in the "Underground Railroad" which spirited Negroes out of bondage. Now, one out of every twenty Pennsylvanians is a Negro; this goes for every fifteenth Philadelphian and every tenth Pittsburgher. The Pittsburgh *Courier*, with thirteen different editions, has the largest national circulation of any Negro paper — 280,000. In the opinion of its managing editor, William G. Nunn, "the situation of the Negroes in Pittsburgh is probably

better than in any comparable American city."

Theoretically, Negroes and whites enjoy the same rights to public schooling. This goes back to Penn's insistence on a governmental provision "for the education of all children." As early as 1722 a Quaker advertised that he would teach his "poor Brethren the Negroes . . . without any manner of expense." And by establishing the nation's first girls' school at Germantown in 1742, the Moravians paved the way for outstanding women's colleges like Bryn Mawr, Wilson and the Pennsylvania College for Women. Although the University of Pennsylvania was founded years after Harvard, Yale and William and Mary, it can honestly claim to be the "first functioning academic institution in North America to be termed a University." Since Christopher Taylor's first log-cabin school at Tinicum in 1642, Pennsylvania has zoomed to a \$33 million-a-year education budget and supports wholly or in part 71 colleges and teacher colleges, more than any other state.

Thaddeus Stevens is recognized as Pennsylvania's champion of education, Benjamin Franklin as its most interesting literary figure. Author, printer and publisher, Franklin made Philadelphia a foremost publishing center, a touchstone of the literary spirit. Along elm-shaded streets where Paine, Whittier, Whitman and Poe once walked, now flourish publishing houses the size of Curtis and Lippincott, affluent newspapers like the

Bulletin and *Inquirer*. The city is full of museums, music halls, theatres and art galleries; nearby is the greatest collection of French paintings in the world. Where once rope-dancers, "musical lanthorns" and Punch and Judy shows were the vogue, some 200 dramatic groups have now sprung up, and Philadelphians are guinea pigs for many Broadway plays. The Philadelphia Symphony, molded by Leopold Stokowski, is a paragon of musical perfection; its outdoor concerts in Robin Hood Dell are nationally visited. Probably more famous musical artists have been trained at Curtis Institute than anywhere else in the land.

North of Philadelphia lies beautiful Bucks County, where *literati* who hit the jackpot spend their best days in the rustic comfort of lively and fashionable farms. This is their reward for success: it is enjoyed by Mary Roberts Rhinehart, Marc Connelly, George S. Kaufman, Christopher Morley, George Kelly and Clifford Odets, all of whom, incidentally, are Pennsylvania-born.

v

The state is also nationally known for its politics but in a more notorious way. It seems paradoxical that a citizenry reared on Penn's liberal precepts and Franklin's passion for honesty and right should fall prey so readily to corrupt politics and a system of spoils. Yet that has been Pennsylvania's fate. Boss-ruled by big money, the people have tolerated

an astonishing succession of opportunistic masters unrivaled by any other state. "The names flicker in and out of history," wrote John Gunther in *Inside U. S. A.*:

Matthew S. Quay, the first statewide boss, who like William S. Vare was refused a seat in the Senate "even when it was controlled by his own party," so dubious was his reputation; the late Senator Boies Penrose, who ate himself to death, and whose statue faces the capital at Harrisburg today, in significant symbolism; the coal masters like Frick and the iron masters, oil masters, railway masters; in a different category, eruptive romantic youngsters like William C. Bullitt, who was beaten recently in the Philadelphia mayoralty by an unholy coalition between tycoons and Communists; ancient and glacial magnates like Andrew W. Mellon, "meanest man in the world," and odd characters who sat next to him in the Cabinet like "Puddler Jim" Davis, former Secretary of Labor and ruler of the loyal Order of Moose.

Time has changed the actors but the play is much the same. Joe Grundy and Joe Pew ride high in the Republican saddle, sharing a dread of high taxes and low tariffs and an ingrained hatred for the New Deal. With the rest of the state just about even-Stephen votewise, Philadelphia's whopping plurality keeps the GOP solidly intrenched. In nearly 50 years there has been only one Democratic Senator—Joseph Guffey, and he rode in on the strength of Roosevelt's popularity.

Joseph Newton Pew, Jr. is politically supreme in Quakertown and, along with the garbage-collecting Vare Brothers, deserves a lot of dis-

credit for the city's fearful record of civic corruption and shabby municipal facilities. Pew owns lavish interests in Sun Oil, shipping, and two of the nation's leading magazines, *Pathfinder* and *Farm Journal*, which do their expert best to keep the influential farm electorate happy about Republican rule. Pew digs deep into his pocket for the GOP. He was accused of contributing heavily in a vain attempt to lick Roosevelt in 1944; he has reportedly given away over a million campaign dollars during the last ten years.

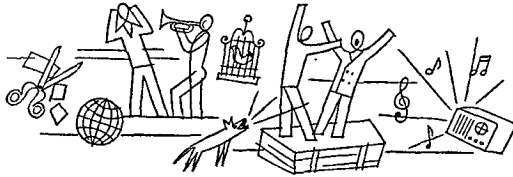
"What Grundy says goes in Pennsylvania," is a bitterly frequent but oft-exaggerated indictment of Joseph Ridgeway Grundy, wealthy Bristol manufacturer and another longtime power in the Republican party. Perhaps the foremost exponent of the high tariff in the country, octogenarian "Quaker Joe" has built a political machine in eastern Pennsylvania which is quietly more successful than the noisy combines of Mayor Kelly and Boss Crump. Whereas the Democrats under state chairman David I. Lawrence can, with labor's help, muster a telling majority in the industrial Pittsburgh section they cannot for the life of them lick Joe Grundy on his own home grounds. A good example was the recent Congressional battle in Lehigh Valley, a powerful CIO stronghold. With the Taft-Hartley Act as the main issue, the Grundy machine simply ran away with the contest.

The man who probably comes

closer to being political head man in Pennsylvania, more powerful than even Grundy, is the tall, 64-year-old retired General, U. S. Senator "Ed" Martin. Profane, stiffly reserved, forthright, Martin has been called, by an opponent no less, "the shrewdest governor Pennsylvania ever had." By steering a middle-of-the-road course (he is a friend of big business, yet a sponsor of liberal legislation) Martin has achieved remarkable success. His gubernatorial triumph in 1942 was a landslide, as was his subsequent election to the Senate. He will go to the next Republican national convention with the state's 72 electoral votes in his pocket, and there is even talk about nominating him for the Vice-Presidency. It was Martin, not Guffey, who picked the present governor, James Duff, who had previously been a fearless attorney-general. Duff, over the opposition of the Grundy-Pew combine, pushed through some much-needed reforms for ending stream pollution in Philadelphia harbor and other industrial centers.

The paradoxes in the state's politics are reflections of Pennsylvania's enormous diversity. With so many different ways of life flourishing inside her borders, Pennsylvania poses a problem to any political organization. Other states — Iowa, for example, or Vermont — are more homogeneous. Their citizens, like their landscapes and their industries, are readily caricatured. But Pennsylvania is different. Pennsylvania has everything.

THE SOAP BOX



EDITORIAL NOTES

Lack of space has forced us to omit the *Mercury Reappraisal* for a while, but we hope, perhaps in the next issue, to print a superb reappraisal of James Madison, by Irving Brant, who has recently completed the second in a projected three-volume study of the fourth President. He argues, with immense plausibility, that Madison's importance to this country was on a par with Jefferson's and Hamilton's.

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We also wish to announce that we have in type a fascinating study of New York ship news reporters, a particularly colorful breed of journalists, by Caroline Bird Menez. Her "Businessman's Newspaper" (December 1946), a study of the New York *Journal of Commerce*, is still being discussed with pleasure in all circles where the higher reaches of magazine article writing are appreciated.

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Running through the biographies of a group of our authors we were im-

pressed by the fact that while many of our readers are lawyers and clergymen, not many of these are numbered among our contributors. Further inquiry revealed that the same applies pretty much to other magazines in the same general category as THE AMERICAN MERCURY. This fact is rather surprising. Why, indeed, do clergymen and lawyers write less for general periodicals than, say, professors of history and newspaper folk? They are in daily contact with fascinating areas of human experience, and are compelled to use the English language, both orally and in writing, almost every moment of their professional workday. Do they lack the desire to communicate? Are they afraid of the limelight of the printed word? We doubt it. Such relationships as we've had with lawyers and clergymen have been so pleasant that we would like to have more of them.

We point to "Inside Prohibition Headquarters," by the Rev. Alson J. Smith, a Methodist minister, and "Historic Supreme Court Battles," by Nathaniel Phillips, an eminent

New York attorney, both in the last issue, and we hope that other members of the clergy and the bar will favor us with articles of the same superior quality. A cordial welcome awaits all who take advantage of this invitation.



We have received several letters inquiring why we did not print an original short story in the December issue. The reason is a simple one: we were unable to find one with sufficient merit, and instead of embarrassing our readers with an inferior piece of fiction, we decided to omit the story from the issue altogether. We were more fortunate in the January issue, in which we printed "The Sky Hook," by Kenneth Millar, an immensely skillful study of the thoughts passing through the mind of a dying man, and we are equally fortunate in this issue, with "The Last-Borned," a truly powerful study of bigotry and poverty in the South, by James McAdory. Mr. McAdory has never been published before. We are pleased to offer him his first hearing, for he reveals a considerable imagination and an admirable facility with the English language.

The Millars and McAdorys, in all frankness, are not very plentiful these days. The middling quality of most of the short fiction that has been reaching magazine offices is a depressing phenomenon. What has happened to the short story writers of the land? Are they all trying to reach Holly-

wood *via* the slicks? Why are so many of them trying to imitate the *New Yorker* sketches? The latter are very good, but the area of human life most of them deal with is pretty limited. . . . Perennial optimists that we are, we think better stories are being written than the majority that reach most editors' desks, and we make a vigorous plea to their authors to send their work to us. We promise a sympathetic, yes, an eager reading and a quick report.

One parting word on the subject of the short story: we are not after a "special type" of story, and we have no taboos of any kind. All we ask of a story is that it be honest, interesting to mature men and women, and effectively written. As for length, we prefer stories in the neighborhood of 3000 words — but a very pleasant surprise awaits any author who sends in a longer short story with the quality of, say, *Ethan Frome* or *A Lost Lady*.

ROYAL SUCCESSION

If George VI dies, Princess Elizabeth, of course, becomes the sovereign. But, suppose, through the inscrutable will of God, the present Queen of England gives birth to a son shortly after Elizabeth has ascended the throne, does the male heir supplant Elizabeth — or what happens? I ask these questions with all due respect and allegiance.

PRENTISS O. WOLCOTT

Kingston, Jamaica

ACADEMIC AND JOURNALISTIC CRITICS

I have noticed lately that more and more professors of English at Harvard, New York University, Princeton, Yale and other institutions of higher learning have been reviewing books for the *New York Times Book Review*, the *New York Herald Tribune Books*, and other national critical organs. What has impressed me is the general low quality of their writing and criticism. One would expect a professor to have more to say, and to say it better, than a mere reviewer, but this is not the case. My point? I don't know that I have any, except that things are pretty bad in the realm of literary criticism, and one avenue where improvement will not come from is the colleges. If anything, the professors are even duller than the usual hacks who earn \$16.50 for a review of a novel about China or a three-volume study of Peruvian economics.

ANTHONY O. DIMARCO

Brooklyn, N. Y.

ART AND PROPAGANDA

Because the Communists insist that art is only a weapon in the class struggle, and because the art produced in Communist-controlled countries is uniformly bad, there has arisen a tendency among critics to denounce *all* art which aims to be propaganda. Meaningless platitudes like "art for

art's sake" are again much in favor.

But a distinction has to be made. Good art *can* also be effective propaganda, as it has been all through history. Euripides' *Trojan Women* was propaganda for pacifism (it was written during the Peloponnesian War), Hogarth's *Rake's Progress* was propaganda for temperance, Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was propaganda for female emancipation, Tschaikovsky's *March Slav* was propaganda for Russian nationalism, and Whitman's *I Hear America Singing* was propaganda for American nationalism. Yet most people will grant that all these are at least respectable works of art.

The point, stated simply, is this: art which is dictated by the censor of a totalitarian state has to be separated from art which is merely socially significant. The former, inevitably, will be bad art (and bad propaganda too, by the way); the latter need not be.

JOSEPH Z. NEWMAN

Hartford, Conn.

PROSPECTS FOR WORLD WAR III

Wherever I go, sooner or later someone starts a discussion about how soon the next war will come. No one seems to question whether there will be a next war. My last discussion was impressive because the group consisted of a former head of a great country, one of the former top men of a smaller European country, an international traveler and observer of note, and a young Annapolis flyer.

The former head of a great country believed that war was pretty certain within two years, but if it didn't come then, we would have a long peace. He had very little except a hunch to back up his view.

The former top man of the small European country thought war was possible at any moment because some incident could take place in any one of a dozen different countries where America and Russia are engaged in a struggle. He thought that there were so many powder kegs that it would be nothing short of a miracle if one of them didn't go off soon.

The international traveler, just returned from Europe, said people everywhere wanted peace; but everywhere expected war, and she felt the way the people did. She didn't know exactly when it would come, or from what direction, but she was dead certain that it would come soon.

The most interesting point of view was that of the young flyer, to whom everyone listened with great interest and respect. He alone had been in the war. He supposedly spoke for the men who had fought the last war and would fight the next. He expected war to come very quickly because there are bold young men in the Air Corps who believe that war with Russia is inevitable, and that the sooner it comes the better. His belief was that some of the bold young men who had something to do with the atomic bomb would simply take it upon themselves to start things moving by dropping a few bombs on Russia. I attrib-

uted his fantastic theory to his youth, but what amazed me was the respectful attention his theory received, and how much belief in it he engendered. I could only explain that on the ground that that was what his listeners hoped would happen! It just couldn't be based on anything else.

My own theory is that there will be no war for at least ten years, and for a very obvious reason. Russia has nothing to gain at the present time by such a war. She has to rebuild vast stretches of her land and recover from the loss of millions of lives. As for America — America certainly will not be the aggressor in any war. If there's a war with Russia, it will be because Russia starts it. And I have a great many doubts that Russia will be ready for a shooting war for at least ten years.

X. Y. Z.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

WAR PROFITS

In the obituaries of the late Earl Baldwin, former Prime Minister of Great Britain, I noted that he gave away all the profits he made in World War I to the government, on the ground that these profits really didn't belong to him but to society. I wonder how many other Englishmen did the same thing. Especially do I wonder how many Americans followed Baldwin's example — in World War I and World War II.

MELVIN SANKEY

Fairbanks, Alaska

GENERAL VLASSOV'S MYSTERY ARMY

BY EUGENE LYONS

AMONG the prisoners swept up by the Allied advance into Central Europe there were hundreds of thousands of Russians in German uniforms, distinguished from the other Hitler troops by the letters ROA on shoulder patches. These initials sum up one of the great, profoundly significant and strangely neglected stories of the war — a story untold to this day, except in misshapen bits, like stray pieces from a jigsaw puzzle. This article represents the first attempt, at least in America, to put the pieces together.

ROA identified members of the *Russkaya Osvoboditel'naya Armia* — Russian Army of Liberation — more popularly known as the Vlassov Army. Everything conspired to veil that force in mystery, so that today it still remains the unknown army of World War II, its true dimensions, motives and military rôle distorted by rival propagandas.

Why the Kremlin chose to ignore the existence of the ROA is obvious: the implications of a large anti-Soviet army composed of Soviet citizens were not exactly pleasant. Russian leaders thundered against traitors and quis-

lings in general but carefully avoided mention of specific formations or leaders. That silence has remained unbroken to date. For the people inside the USSR the Vlassov movement has therefore become an illicit rumor inflated by wishful thinking, never mentioned in public.

Why the Germans played down the episode is less obvious. In normal logic it should have been blown up as a political triumph over the Russian enemy. But Nazi logic was far from normal. Russian patriotism, even of the anti-Soviet kind, did not fit into the Hitler view of those "sub-human Slavs," or into the Nazi plans for dismembering a defeated Russia. In any case, German propaganda soft-pedaled and at times blacked out information about its own creature, the ROA.

Thus the only large-scale fighting force Hitler was able to mobilize among conquered peoples became a shadow army whose very existence was only vaguely known to the world. It developed into the most tragic, frustrated and embittered foreign legion on record. Its leaders and fol-

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lowers alike swung desperately between patriotic exaltation and conscience-stricken despair. They fought with the Germans whom they hated, against the democracies whose understanding they quixotically counted on, and they went down to oblivion in the general Nazi débâcle. Tens of thousands of their officers and men are still in hiding throughout Western Europe, aware that Soviet agents are engaged in a ruthless man-hunt to round them up.

The notion that the Soviet régime and its subjects were one in spirit on the fateful morning of June 22, 1941, when the Germans struck, is a crude propaganda myth. Actually the Kremlin rulers were as concerned with the dangers of internal enemies as they were with the invading armies.

A decade of forced collectivization, famine and purges, taking cruel toll in nearly every family in the land, had left sediments of fear, hate and despair. Reports of Nazi methods and ideas did not shock a population familiar with things of the same order at home. Besides, for twenty-two months prior to Hitler's attack the Allies had been cast in the villains' rôle in domestic propaganda.

It could hardly be expected under these circumstances that the Russians would rise to meet the invader in an angry crusading mood before they had learned, from direct experience, the nature of the Nazi beast. History is likely to be more tolerant than contemporary opinion in judging the

millions who were eager to believe the assurances of Germans that they came to "liberate" Russia from Bolshevism.

Slowly, painfully, amidst blood and chaos and heaped-up disasters, the people of the Soviet Union would ultimately be molded into a giant steam-roller to crush the invaders. But that came much later. In the first period the Russians met the onslaught in a confused, lethargic and defeatist spirit. This explains, in large part, the ease with which the Germans overran huge territories and took nearly four million prisoners in the first six months.

Entire armies fought half-heartedly or not at all. Mass desertions became so epidemic that Stalin issued an unprecedented order branding *all* Red troops taken prisoner as deserters. Disgruntled peasants welcomed advancing German forces with the traditional bread and salt. Anti-Soviet partisan groups, usually commanded by deserting Red officers, sprang up everywhere behind the lines as the Germans surged eastward.

It should be recalled that "revolutionary defeatism" — turning international war into civil rebellion — was a familiar and morally respectable idea to a generation reared on Bolshevik theory and history. Those who consciously looked forward to a miraculous chance to overthrow the government had no sense of treason in seeking to "make use of the Germans." Survivors now in exile do not count themselves quislings but defeated patriots. If Stalin did not scruple to join hands with the Nazis to safeguard his

régime, why hesitate to do the same to destroy that régime?

What emerged in 1941-42 was a disorganized, uncoordinated anti-Soviet movement. Its armed formations, in part spontaneous, in the main recruited by the invaders, were used at the outset chiefly against the special NKVD troops operating behind the German lines.

The idea of merging the scattered units into an organized anti-Soviet Russian army took shape in the summer of 1942. Its leader and spokesman was a Lieutenant General in the Red Army, with a brilliant and until then impeccable record of loyalty to Stalin: Andrei A. Vlassov. This man had stood so high in the Kremlin's favor that Allied intelligence services at first refused to credit the report of his collaboration with the enemy. The news of his army was treated gingerly as a possible propaganda hoax. But before long the seriousness of the movement became apparent.

II

Vlassov, of peasant origin, joined the revolution in 1917 while still in his teens. He fought with the Red armies throughout the civil war that followed and commanded the 61st division in the storming of Perekop in 1920. He joined the Communist Party, graduated from the Frunze Military Academy and came to enjoy the confidence of the highest government circles. On one occasion Stalin sent him to China on a confidential mission to Chiang Kai-shek. Only a minority of

the top officers survived the 1936-38 Red Army purges and Vlassov was in this select company.

After the German invasion he was put in command of the Second Assault Army. By personal order of Stalin he was directed to organize the defense of Moscow, and he unquestionably played a vital part in halting the Nazi offensive on the capital. The press gave him formal credit, along with six other generals, as "saviors" of the city, and on January 2, 1942 he was awarded the Order of the Red Banner with the usual fanfare of publicity.

A number of American reporters (Leseur, Kerr, Sulzberger, etc.) interviewed General Vlassov in his headquarters outside Moscow on December 17, 1941. Miss Eve Curie interviewed him several weeks later. They described him as a strong tall man, studious looking, wearing gold-rimmed glasses. All of them reported his confidence in ultimate victory. Miss Curie was especially impressed by his devotion to Stalin and his hatred of the Germans. In Vlassov she saw "a man who waged war with something more than courage: he waged it with passion."¹

As nearly as can be deduced from incomplete evidence, General Vlassov fell into German hands in the first months of 1942. His army was in the main annihilated while attempting to break the Nazi grip on Leningrad.

¹ Later Miss Curie asserted that the man she interviewed was not the general of the same name heading the ROA. She was certainly in error, according to Americans and Russians who have studied available Vlassov materials, including photographs.

After weeks of hiding in the frozen forests he was captured with a small group of his men.

What happened thereafter? What inducements or pressures were used to win him over? What soul-searching led him to join the Germans? There are many surmises but no reliable answers. The records show only that toward the end of June Vlassov announced his liberating rôle with an appeal to all "Russian patriots" through the press in the German-held areas. Speculation about his motives is fascinating but fruitless. The spectacle of faithful Communists turning against the Kremlin régime when a chance offers has become fairly familiar in recent years.

The idea of freeing Russia from the Bolshevik yoke with the aid of Hitler sounds hare-brained to outsiders. Evidently it made sense to Vlassov, to other Red generals on his staff — B. L. Galushkin, F. I. Trukhim, Victor I. Maltzev, Malishkin, Shilenkov, etc. — and to scores of thousands of eager volunteers. For himself, Vlassov in his early statements emphasized that though he had prospered personally under the Soviets, he supported the aspirations of the Russian masses for freedom from the Kremlin tyranny.

ROA headquarters was established at Dabendorf, a Berlin suburb. A school for political instruction was there set up under General Trukhim; some 4000 students, mostly officers, passed through its courses by the end of the war. In August and September 1932 Vlassov was permitted to tour

the Leningrad, Byelorussia and Pskov regions. The response to his initial appeals was enormous. Tens of thousands of letters from civilians and captive Red Army men poured in on the Dabendorf headquarters, whose APO was Feldpost No. 28264.

The great majority of volunteers came from prisoner-of-war camps. However they may have rationalized it, these wretched Russians were primarily tempted by the chance of escaping the hunger and horror of those German hell-holes. A document disclosed at Nuremberg, dated February 1942, shows that of a claimed total of 3,900,000 Soviet prisoners, 500,000 had already died and only 1,300,000 were considered fit to work. Because the USSR was not a signatory to the Geneva convention, Russian prisoners were deprived of all protection against Nazi sadism. Entry into the ranks of the *Vlassovtzi* meant a reprieve from slow death.

Of course, surviving volunteers among the refugees reject this explanation in anger. Had they retained any faith in the Soviet régime, they insist, they would not have donned German uniforms under any conditions.

Few estimates of the size of the ROA agree. As many as 800,000 at one time or another wore its insignia. But probably less than a third of them were acknowledged by the Vlassov leaders as belonging to their movement. The Nazis deliberately complicated the picture by treating national separatist groups from the USSR (Cossacks, Ukrainians, Tadjiks,

Turkomens, etc.) as parts of the ROA, though separatism was violently repudiated by the Vlassov movement.

The most significant fact, however, is not the actual but the potential scope of the recruitment. The general conviction, expressed both by Russian and German sources, is that the ROA could have mobilized at least two million *if the Nazis had not obstructed and sabotaged their own creation*. We cannot know whether and to what extent the Bolsheviks were frightened by the Vlassov Army, but there is ample evidence that the Nazis came to fear that they had built a possible Frankenstein.

Almost from the start a deep contradiction developed between the Russian nationalist sentiments of the *Vlassovtzi* and the racial obsessions of the German leaders. The ROA was caught, mauled, shoved around and humiliated in a continuous tug-of-war between the *Wehrmacht*, which was concerned solely with military purposes, and the Nazi ideologists, notably Alfred Rosenberg, who were concerned with keeping all "Eastern barbarians" in their place.

In public statements and in the Dabendorf indoctrination courses, Vlassov spokesmen always insisted on the sovereignty and inviolability of Russia as the basis of their movement. Collaboration, they explained, was governed by necessity—it was a means to an end and involved neither territorial nor political commitments. Privately, this expression of national patriotism went much further. It

went, in fact, to the point of envisioning possible military action against the Germans should the security and honor of a "liberated" Russia require it. Nazi fear that a resurgent Russian nationalism of their own nurturing might boomerang against German expansion and colonization plans thus was not entirely unfounded.

By the end of 1942 Rosenberg, head of the *Ostministerium*, had won his point: the military and propaganda value of the Russian formation was not worth the risks and doctrinal compromises involved. The German High Command itself showed signs of nervousness over the growth and the ardor of the Vlassov movement. Upon orders from the highest quarters the German-controlled Russian-language press therefore ceased to publicize the ROA or gave it only grudging notices. Recruiting was blocked. The movements of ROA leaders were rigidly restricted.

As guerrilla warfare increased in occupied Russia, the Rosenberg theory that the Slavs were unregenerate and must be softened by master-race terror became dominant. This was naturally reflected in a deterioration of relations with Hitler's Russian recruits. There were more and more explosions of anti-German feeling within anti-Soviet formations. Arrests and executions of insubordinate ROA commanders became commonplace. The scope of Vlassov's activities was narrowed and the blanket of silence around his movements was drawn more tightly. If his effectiveness was thereby re-

duced, his moral authority among his followers was reinforced. German harassment tended to take the edge off the "made-in-Germany" label which was his biggest moral handicap.

At best it was an unhappy, mutually suspicious Russo-German marriage of convenience. Symptomatic of the strained atmosphere were the constant rumors that General Vlassov had been arrested or killed. It is fairly well established that on at least one occasion he was taken into custody and held incommunicado. Early in 1944 the Germans were obliged to take cognizance of a new crop of rumors by announcing formally that "General Vlassov is alive and well," though his whereabouts could not be disclosed for military reasons.

The Rosenberg kind of aversion to Vlassov and his followers can be tasted in an SS proclamation of October 14, 1943, a copy of which reached England.² Said Himmler:

The Slav peoples have never been able to settle their own affairs. . . . In this connection I would like to mention openly the name of General Vlassov. Great hopes were set on this General Vlassov. As many will have foreseen, these hopes were not justified. . . . With a conceit characteristic of the Russian and the Slav, Herr Vlassov began to tell a tale to the effect that Germany has never been able to conquer Russia, that Russia can only be conquered by Russians.

In the measure that the Germans reacted against the all-Russian ROA, they devoted themselves to encourag-

ing the Russian separatist movements: Cossack groups, Ukrainian armies, a Georgian Legion, special units of Crimean Tatars, Karachi, Inguchi, Tadjiks and the like. These *Ostlegionen* carried no threat to the planned German domination of Russia. In the nature of the case Vlassov people were hostile to such minority contingents.

The whole story of the ROA composes in retrospect into a pattern of Nazi duplicity. The original scheme had assumed the establishment of a provisional Russian governing committee to administer occupied areas. Vlassov continually demanded what he had been promised: a homogeneous army under independent Russian command with its own fighting sectors on the Eastern fronts. He had bargained for more humane treatment of Russian prisoners and labor deportees.

The Nazis violated every promise and reneged on every understanding. Not until the end of 1944 was the ROA allowed to organize above the battalion level and then only in three ill-equipped divisions. Vlassov troops were dispersed and integrated with *Wehrmacht* outfits. In self-defeating arrogance, the Germans even restricted ROA propaganda in Hitler-held Russia.

And all the time pressure was brought on Vlassov to consent to postwar frontiers deep inside his country. He consistently refused to discuss this, maintaining that he had no authority to deal with matters within the compe-

² Quoted in the British *Contemporary Review*, February 1945.

tence of the future "free Russia." With the same stubbornness he defied all Nazi demands that he make anti-Semitic commitments.

III

By the beginning of 1944 the bulk of the Russian Liberation troops, some 800 battalions, had been transferred to the Western front and deployed along the Atlantic Wall, from Holland to the Spanish frontier. For the *Vlassoutzi* this was the most disillusioning blow of all. They had enrolled to fight the Red Army. At every opportunity they stressed that they had no quarrel with the Anglo-Americans. Now that Allied victory was in sight, they were being deliberately placed in the path of the Anglo-Americans!

ROA morale collapsed. Russian officers were increasingly superseded by Germans; more and more of them were arrested or simply "disappeared." Vlassov and other top leaders were never permitted to go to the West, where most of the forces theoretically under their command were concentrated. Only General Malishkin made one brief visit to southern France.

ROA survivors today claim almost unanimously that their leaders instructed them secretly to surrender and to turn their arms against the Germans. Many of them joined the Maquis before the invasion of Normandy; more did afterwards. Some succeeded in joining the Italian Resistance in northern Italy. The majority were kept in line by their German commanders and retreated with

the formations to which they were attached.

With total disaster around the corner, the Nazis finally allowed Vlassov to organize politically, as he had demanded from the start. The decision was taken at a Berlin meeting in October 1944. On November 14 the *Vlassoutzi* therefore held their first and only convention, in Prague. They established a Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia — in which there were more civilians than military men — and adopted a Manifesto which was made public four days later.

Despite impassioned oratory and fervid dedication to the "new Russia," it was a sad and quixotic gathering. There was a desperate self-delusion in the way delegates argued over details of the political and social patterns of their "liberated" fatherland; in the way Vlassov, Malishkin, Maltzev and other generals invoked a tomorrow which they knew in their hearts would never dawn.

As for their brave Manifesto, it was a stillborn document. Again in violation of solemn promises, the Germans sabotaged its distribution. The convention's acceptance of "the assistance of Germany on condition that the honor and independence of our country shall remain unprejudiced" must have seemed a piece of Slav impudence to the Nazis even in their twilight hours. The German press and radio either ignored the Prague meeting or damned it with faint notice. Only vague echoes of the gathering

and its pronouncements were allowed to reach the millions of Russians outside Russia; not even echoes reached their countrymen inside Russia.

The Manifesto dedicated the movement to "abolition of the Stalinist tyranny; liberation of the Russian people from the Bolshevik dictatorship; recovery by the Russian people of all rights won by them during the Revolution of 1917." (The reference was, of course, to the democratic revolution in March, not the Bolshevik *coup* in November.) It called for a civilization based on the individual rather than the state, the end of terror, the release of all political prisoners. While pledging a vast amount of socialization, it declared against *forced* collective economy. Rightist *émigrés* of the Tsarist generation assailed the Manifesto as too red, Soviet sympathizers denounced it as "reactionary."

Considering that Germany was on the brink of dissolution, ROA forces trapped in Western Europe and Stalin's mighty armies rolling inexorably westward, the Manifesto seems a curious monument to fanatic self-deception. At the start of the Vlassov movement it might have rallied millions of Stalin's unhappy subjects. Now, at the end, its faith in "liberation" seemed ludicrous or inexpressibly pathetic, depending on one's sympathies.

In high-pitched rhetoric the Manifesto summoned "tens of millions" inside and outside Russia to greet "the hour of liberation." Only a few thousands ever heard the utopian call.

ROA officers were again stymied in renewed recruiting efforts. Russians fleeing before the Red tide who sought to join up with Vlassov were forced instead into SS divisions—and deserted, of course, at the first chance. Three homogeneous divisions were finally organized after long haggling and Nazi sabotage. A plan for ROA air-borne leaflet-dropping units collapsed when Vlassov insisted on full control over the contents of the leaflets.

At the very end the *Wehrmacht* did allow the *Vlassovtzi* to undertake a tentative operation. As the Red Army approached the Oder River, an ROA force under a Colonel Sakharov was dispatched to the Eastern front. He fought a successful engagement in the course of which Red Army units passed over voluntarily to his side. On surrendering they declared that they did so solely because they were faced by Vlassov troops.

This astonishing incident at the end of the war, when Stalin's victory was a certainty, was reported by Russian prisoners to American interrogators. Somehow it points up the frenzied romanticism that marked the death throes of the Vlassov movement and its mystery army. In the rising flood of disaster the ROA general staff solemnly labored on elaborate plans for penetration of the Russian lines and an uprising against the Communists.

The ROA achieved a moment of Allied glory in Prague. Its First Division, presumably under Vlassov's direct orders, came to the rescue of the

hard-pressed Czech Resistance and saved the city from German destruction. The salvaged city was turned over to the Red Army, which promptly arrested all *Vlassovtzi* who did not manage to escape and shot them, officers and men alike, in wholesale lots. The remnants of ROA troops in Czechoslovakia and Austria surrendered to the United States forces.

General Vlassov was taken prisoner in Prague on May 5, 1945 and handed over to the Red Army by the Americans. Nothing was heard of him for fifteen months. The mystery was ended with a Moscow announcement, on August 1, 1946, that ten traitors, among them Andrei A. Vlassov, had been executed after a secret court martial. About the nature of their treachery the Russian people were told exactly nothing.

As far as the public record inside Stalin's domain is concerned, there never was any Russian Liberation Army. But among Russians outside Russia, especially the hundreds of thousands of new postwar *émigrés* raised under the Soviet system, Vlassov is remembered and the movement he headed luxuriates as a heroic legend. His name has become a banner.

These homesick exiles are inclined to overlook the quisling ingredients in the story and to glamorize its patriotic inspirations. They profess to see in the whole tragic, confused and ill-fated Liberation Movement the proof that there is "another Russia," deeply opposed to Bolshevism and its works — a Russia that awaits an opportune moment to assert itself, weapons in hand, in the name of national freedom.

SONNET OF FOUR ELEMENTS

BY ULRICH TROUBETZKOY

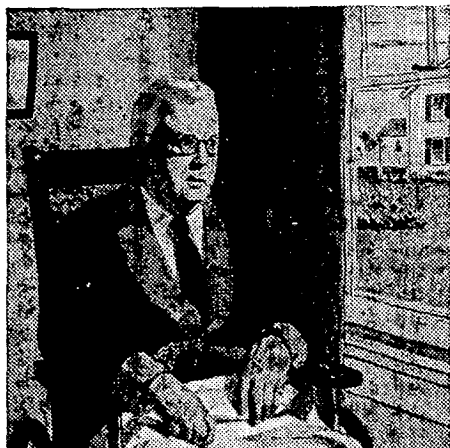
Something in me that longs to be as birds
Is tugged to April's North and Autumn's South,
And hears wing-music from a cage of words
With a soft sob of silence in the mouth.
Something in me that has not home nor root
Resists the white narcotic sleep of frost
And voyages through seasons without fruit
To seek like wind and like the wind be lost.
Something in me of ocean lifts the blood,
And something is headlong river, something lake;
Something in me is fire, but sand and mud
Made porcelain or glass by flame will break,
And, in the end, the patient narrow earth
Will hug the remnants of all lust and mirth.

What you can do about

He has a normal heart

Your heart started beating before you were born, and in a normal day pumps about 11 tons of blood. When you are relaxed your heart works about one third of the time and rests two thirds. When you are active, or if you are overweight, it works harder and rests less.

That's why it's important for most people in the middle and later years of life to avoid excessive physical effort and to keep their weight down at least to normal. When you learn to "take it easy" you help your heart.



He abused his heart

Here was a successful businessman who repeatedly overexerted himself. By age 48 he had high blood pressure, and complained of occasional pains around the heart.

His doctor advised him, among other things, to get more rest and to cut down his week-end activities. But he continued to overexert himself.

At age 52, he suffered a heart attack. The extra strains upon his weakened heart had so damaged it that he became a "cardiac cripple." He had *not* helped his heart.

TO VETERANS—IF YOU HAVE

YOUR HEART

helped his heart

This man, a doctor, had a heart attack at age 55. After recovering he returned to his practice, but cut down his working hours and the number of his patients.

He took time for a daily rest. He developed several hobbies which kept him happy and busy in leisure hours but did not put a strain on his heart. At 65 he retired completely from his practice. By thus helping his heart—by knowing how to live within its limitations—he was able to enjoy many useful years of life after retirement.



Start helping your heart early

While there is much less heart trouble in youth and early middle age than there used to be, more and more people are now living to reach the later years when there is a higher death rate from heart ailments.

By learning as you grow older to stop before you're overtired, by knowing how to relax, by having periodic medical examinations, and by following your doctor's advice—you can help avoid heart trouble, or lessen the effect if it should strike. Medical science has developed potent drugs and skilled techniques to help keep you and your heart healthy.

Research on diseases of the heart is increasing. To aid in this work, 151

Life Insurance Companies support the Life Insurance Medical Research Fund which makes grants for special studies in heart disease.

To learn more about helping your heart, send for Metropolitan's free booklet, L-38, "Your Heart."

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NATIONAL SERVICE LIFE INSURANCE—KEEP IT!

THE LAST-BORNED

A STORY

BY JAMES McADORY

CLYDE squatted in the dust in the shade of the chinaberry tree and listened to the low moans coming from his mother's bedroom. He was confused and frightened that his mother was going to have another child.

Ain't fittin' fer ma to born another'n, he thought. I'm the last-borned. He scrubbed at the pale beard on his chin. Hit ain't just right fer ma to born this'un. Said I was to of been the last-borned. Hit ain't right — won't be the youngest when this'un come.

The moaning in the house seemed to grow louder. He put his fingers in his ears. He thought of Tuckie, the Negro midwife, who tended his mother.

Hadn't Tuckie stood in the dim light of the bedroom with her eyes popped out and said, "Mist' Clyde, this hyere one ain' right. You mama too old and done seen too much misery. You best git a doctor, Mist' Clyde. You best git a doctor."

And he had stood there in the dim

light and heard his mother groan, and he'd had to bite his lip to keep from running. I'm a-going on eighteen, he thought, but with Tuckie a-popping her eyes at me and ma a-groaning, and me not being the last-borned, hit was enough to make a grewed up man to run.

"I'll study about hit, Tuckie," he said then. "Reckon I can git a doctor, if'n I set my mind to hit." Then he hurried out to sit in the shade of the chinaberry tree to think out his problem.

He tried now to think, but Tuckie's voice kept coming back. "I tell you, Mist' Clyde, the Lawd ain' meant fo' Miss Eva to git this'un. They's somethin' terrible wrong — this hyere bein' the fourth day she done been tryin' to git shut of hit. She gonna die fo' sho, if'n yawl don' do somethin'." Tuckie's voice was low and quiet and dreadful.

Clyde rubbed away the gooseflesh on his arms. Hit's terrible hard on a man to think he were the last-borned and then come to find out he ain't

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the last-borned. But, if'n I put my mind to hit, I oughtta could think up somethin'.

Now above the moans, he heard the powerful sonorous tones of his father's voice lifted in prayer. Clyde shuddered. He was frightened to hear his father pray. His father prayed always before he beat Clyde. He asked the Lord-God to show Clyde the light, to steer him into paths of righteousness.

He'll start a-cursin' the Lord in a minute, Clyde thought. Then he'll fetch out the big whip and commence lookin' fer me. Best I git from here right now.

He stood and walked toward the rear of the sagging house. He jumped and tensed when Tuckie's husband called to him. "You oughtta not yell at me like that, Catfish," he said. "Near scared me outta my skin. And don't stand there a-poppin' your eyes at me." His voice was tearful.

"Ask you pardon, Mist' Clyde. I ain' meant to," Catfish said.

"Reckon you don't mean to breathe neither. Don't bother me none now, Catfish. I got a terrible worry to study at."

"Just what I wants to ask you 'bout," Catfish said. He rolled his eyes and looked at the ground. "Tuckie done told me Miss Eva need a doctor powerful bad." He glanced at Clyde. "Where you gonna git a doctor at, Mist' Clyde?"

"Reckon I can git a doctor, if'n I set my mind to hit."

"Sho, you can do most anythin',

if'n you set you mind to hit, Mist' Clyde. But Tuckie say you mother be dead time you mule-back to git a doctor. Tuckie know what she sayin'."

"Reckon Ma'll just got to hang on 'til I git back with the doctor," Clyde said.

"She cain' hang on much longer. Tuckie say she hanging by the skin of her teeths now."

"Ma ain't got no right to be a-bornin' another'n." Tears slid down Clyde's thin cheeks. "She told me I was to of been the last-borned. Now I cain't git this here thing straight in my head, Catfish. I cain't."

"The mainest thing is to git a doctor," Catfish said.

"They's a doctor — they's one up to Double Oaks."

"Shucks — cain't help you ma twenty mile from here." Catfish watched Clyde's face.

"He helped me when that rattle-snake bit my barefoot."

"You ma worse off than rattle-snake-bit, Mist' Clyde. You gotta git a doctor. You gotta make haste."

"Near died when that snake bit my foot, Catfish."

"Sho, you did. Hit would of kilt most mens — but you gotta git a doctor-man fo' you ma, Mist' Clyde."

"Pa said hit were the devil as bit me. Said that rattler was Beelybub-hissself. Laid me out with the big whip — 'cause the devil put his tooth mark on me. Catfish, hit weren't the devil — hit were a rattlesnake. Hit *were*."

"You gotta git a doctor-man fo'

you ma, Mist' Clyde. You gotta make haste and git a doctor."

"Pa'd beat the daylights outta me, if'n I took the mule to fetch a doctor. He'd take the big whip. . . ."

"Sho, he'd beat the red blood out you, Mist' Clyde. But you gotta git a doctor. You gotta git 'im in a powerful big hurry."

Clyde squatted on his heels. He shivered and shook. He clasped his knees and rocked and sobbed. "I'm — last-borned. I — I cain't git no doctor — I'm the — the last-borned."

Catfish squatted beside Clyde and patted him on the shoulder. "'At's all right now, Mist' Clyde. Shut off them tears. Ole Catfish git a doctor fo' you ma. He ain't nothing but a nigger-doctor, but he powerful good at borning young'uns. I git him, if'n you tell me, Mist' Clyde. Have 'im hyere in less 'n fifteen minutes, if'n you say so, Mist' Clyde."

Clyde squeezed his eyes tight-shut. Ain't got no right to put this burden on me, he thought. I'm the last-borned. "I — I don't know, Catfish. I just don't know. Cain't git hit straight in my head."

"We gotta git a doctor, Mist' Clyde. You tell me to, and I git 'im fo' sho."

"You — you tell me what to do. I'm the last borned — I cain't git hit straight in my head."

"You just don' worry you haid no more," Catfish said. "I git that doctor." He patted Clyde on the shoulder, stood up, and trotted away.

Clyde felt a great wave of relief as

he heard Catfish go. Then he heard the moans again and the wrathful voice of his father. He squatted there in the blazing sun and wondered how long it would be before his father came with the big whip. It seemed as if he'd done wrong, but he couldn't think what it was. He stared at the blurred sand between his shoes and felt that a part of him was slowly turning inward, putting a wall between him and the wrath of his father. Then he was asleep.

II

Half an hour later when Catfish touched him on the shoulder, he started and fell backwards. He tried to get to his feet, but his legs wouldn't support him. The tingling and aching in his legs filled him with anguish. Tears spilled into his pale beard.

Catfish bent and lifted him to his feet. "Look out now, Mist' Clyde — you legs done gone asleep fo' sho. You best cling on to ole Catfish fo' a spell."

Again Clyde heard his mother moaning. His mother seemed to have been moaning ever since he could remember. Then he remembered the doctor. "You said you was a-goin' to git a doctor, Catfish. You just a-triflin' with me. You give your word you was gonna git a doctor fer ma."

"Sho, an' ole Catfish ain't tellin' no tale. There he behind us, Mist' Clyde — big as life hisself." Catfish turned Clyde and pointed at the old Negro who sat astride a frowsy, bleached mule.

"That ain't no doctor," Clyde said.

"Hit's a nigger — just a old nigger. You're lying to me, Catfish. Hit's just a old nigger."

"He a nigger-man all right," Catfish said. "But he a doctor, too. He been a-borning young'uns fo' more'n thirty year. He skin ain' white, but he a doctor-man all the same."

Clyde looked at the black bag which hung from the pommel of the saddle. He knew that big needles and little slivers of metal that cut and hurt were in the bag. He shivered and held on to Catfish. "Reckon he's a doctor. He's got a little black bag full of things. I reckon he must be a doctor."

"Sho, he a doctor, Mist' Clyde. You best git 'im in to you ma."

The thin, white-haired Negro slid out of the saddle and unhooked his bag from the pommel. "Catfish tells me we ain't got any time to waste, Mr. Clyde." The doctor's dry, gray face was as calm as his voice.

"You ain' got no worry," Catfish said. "He a good doctor. He come from over to Bailes County. Half the nigger-folk in Bailes County in he little black book."

"Ain't never heard tell of no nigger doctor," Clyde said. "But I reckon he's a doctor — he's got a little black doctor's bag."

"Name's Isaac Nathan, Mr. Clyde," the doctor said. He tugged at the skirt of his black poplin coat. "Maybe we'd better go in and have a look at your ma." He glanced at the sagging house.

"She — she might be better now," Clyde said. "She ain't a-moanin' and a-carryin' on now like she was."

"We best tell you pa we hyere," Catfish said. He glanced toward the front of the house. "You best tell 'im, Mist' Clyde."

"He — he ain't gonna like it," Clyde said. He whimpered. "He ain't gonna like it a-tall, Catfish."

Catfish took Clyde's arm and led him around to the front of the house. "He won' mind, if'n he know hit's fo' to save Miss Eva's life."

"Hit ain't gonna sit right with 'im," Clyde said.

"You go on in there and tell 'im," Catfish said. "Me an' the doctor wait hyere 'til you done finish tell 'im." He pushed Clyde gently toward the steps.

Clyde edged up the rickety steps to the porch. He paused at the door and squinted into the semi-darkness of the front room.

His father was on his knees at the fireplace. His hands were clasped at his chest, and he stared at the ceiling. His lips moved, but there was no sound. Then he saw Clyde at the door. He leaped erect. "Ain't nothin' fear-some to you, devil's son? Kin you look at God's own a-praying and not be a-tremble with fear?" His father spoke in a thin whisper. "You blaspheme a-comin' here and a-botherin' God's own while I'm a-prayin'."

"I — I — just want — ma's powerful sick," Clyde said. His voice shook. "Catfish — got a doctor to help — to help git shut of the new'un."

"Hit's the sin of Eve, your ma's a-paying fer. And hit's a sin to stop God's rightful punishment." The old

man's face shone pale and damp in the darkened room.

"Ma's powerful sick — Tuckie said she was — said she'll die, if'n she don't git — git some help," Clyde said. "Catfish done got this here nigger-doctor to help with the bornin'."

"Nigger-doctor?" the old man whispered. "You say nigger-doctor — a nigger with God's black curse on 'im?"

Clyde couldn't move as his father rushed across the room toward him. He saw his father's fierce, bearded face and then the small red veins in his eyes. He felt his father's fist crack against his head. He reeled backward and fell off the porch into the dust in the yard. He lay in the dust and shuddered and fought for breath.

He didn't know when Catfish and the gray doctor carried him beneath the chinaberry tree. He felt a part of himself turn inward, and a dark warm wall formed between him and his father.

III

He awoke a few minutes later and saw Catfish and the doctor squatting beside him in the shade of the chinaberry. Sweat streamed down Catfish's face. The doctor's face was calm and dry and gray.

"You all right, Mist' Clyde," Catfish said. "You ain' hurted none."

"Head hurts," Clyde said. He groaned and sat up. "He hit my head." He glanced fearfully toward the house. His father sat in a straight chair propped against the wall in the

shadow of the porch. A shotgun lay across his knees.

"If'n he hadn't got that gun, we might of helt 'im while the doctor took care a you ma," Catfish said.

The moans coming from the house were less frequent now. They seemed to Clyde to come from far away.

"Hit me on my head with his fist," Clyde said.

"She ain't got a chance of pulling through," the doctor said. He tugged a large, silver watch from his coat pocket and wound it. He stared at the watch a long time before returning it to his pocket. "It's been so long, don't know whether I could help or not."

"Ain't got no cause fer a-hittin' me on the head," Clyde said.

"'Scuse me fo' speakin' it, Mist' Clyde, but you pa got more devil in 'im than he got the good Lawd." Catfish scooped up a handful of dirt and watched it run between his fingers.

"Said I were the devil's own right-ful son," Clyde said. He whimpered and sniffed his tears. "Won't never make me say I'm the devil's son. I ain't marked by the devil — I'm the last-borned."

"You, pa sho ain' got no use fo' you," Catfish said. He scooped up another handful of dirt.

"Never done nothin' to 'im neither. He ups and whacks me all the time, and I ain't done nothin' to 'im."

"Reckon she'll be better off dead," the doctor said. He glanced toward the house. "No," he said. "I ain't got any right saying any person will be better off dead."

"He kill you one a these days, Mist' Clyde," Catfish said. "Best leave here like you brothers done." He scooped up another handful of dirt and poured it from hand to hand.

"I'm — the — the last-borned — Ma won't let 'im — kill — Ma won't let 'im." Clyde scrubbed the tears from his eyes.

"I don't like living," the doctor said. "There's no good in it. But just the same, I'd rather be alive than dead."

"You pa'd kill the ole devil, if'n he got the chanct, won't he?" Catfish said. "He think you the devil's son."

Clyde shivered. He felt that a bright, limitless space in which he could see and touch nothing was pouring around him. He felt he would be suspended and alone for the rest of time. He held himself tense and waited for the warm darkness to come between him and his father, but the wall didn't form.

The three men went rigid as the woman-screams came from the house. For a moment they didn't move. Then the doctor got to his feet. He clasped his hand and looked at Catfish. "I don't know what to do," he said. "I want to do something, but I don't know what to do."

"They ain' nothin' to do — he still got the gun," Catfish said.

Clyde got to his feet. The screams seemed to batter at his head as if they had weight and substance. He put his finger in his ears, but the screams seemed to grow louder. They seemed to come from inside his head.

He looked at his father. He saw the shotgun. He heard the screams. He saw the shotgun. He heard the screams. His head was full of screams. His father was on the front porch with the shotgun. His mother was on the bed dying. He wouldn't be the last-borned anymore. He wouldn't be anything after his mother died.

His head was full of screams, but he knew he was going to do something. He reached down and picked up a splintered whippetree from the trash-pile near the chinaberry. There seemed to be two of him walking across the yard, one who heard and listened to the screams and measured them, and the other who knew he was going to do something.

He watched his father get up and face him.

"What you want, devil's son? You done come fer more of the Lord's good punishment?" His father's voice was faint and withdrawn.

Clyde went slowly up the steps hearing the screams and knowing he was going to do something. He didn't look at the shotgun. He watched his father's mouth and heard a ragged whisper. "Kill . . . you."

He saw the splintered whippetree strike his father's forehead. He felt the jar of the blow in his arm and shoulder. Then he felt the heat of the gun-flash on his cheek. The screams turned to little bright slivers of light and filled his eyes with pain. The light from the slivers spun and sank until they were like glow worms in the dusk.

After what seemed like a long time,

Clyde heard the doctor's fogged voice. He heard Catfish answer.

"Just a little powder burn — nothing much," the doctor said.

"Like not to of had a head," Catfish said. "Never would of thought he could get up the spunk to do what he done."

Then Clyde remembered his mother and his father and the broken whippletree. An oppressive quiet seemed to hold the land. He sat up and glanced about the porch. His father lay on the floor near him. His hand still grasped the shotgun.

He sat there thinking how strange and different his father looked. Then he realized all at once that everything looked new and different. The two Negro men, his father, the yard and the sky had a new sharpness. He felt as if he'd been lifted out of a winter fog. The earth lay bright, sharp and green around him.

IV

"I — I'm sorry about your ma — and pa," the doctor said. His face sagged. It seemed even more gray than it had been.

There was silence for a long time. Ma and pa — both dead, Clyde thought. He struggled to return to the moment before he struck his father, but there seemed to be a wall beyond which he couldn't pass. His father and his mother, too, seemed like shadows, like remembered people in a dream. He glanced at his father and saw the shotgun. All at once he remembered the rattlesnake that had

bitten him on the foot when he was twelve years old. His childhood came flooding back so vividly that it seemed more recent than the death of his father and mother.

"Your mother's passed on," the doctor said. "I might have saved her, if — but she was — she was worn out."

Clyde looked at the old man lying on the porch. A plumb stranger to me, he thought. I kilt my pa, and him a plumb stranger to me.

Catfish glanced at the dead man and sighed deeply. "They's gonna be trouble," he said. "They's gonna be real trouble. I ain' a-wantin' to be no part of this trouble — Tuckie ain' neither."

Tuckie came around the side of the house. She stood at the edge of the porch and stared down across the valley. Then she took off her head cloth and dried her face.

"If'n you don't mind, Mist' Clyde," Catfish said. "Reckon me and Tuckie best go way from here."

"I reckon you better," Clyde said. "I reckon yawl better go."

For a moment Catfish hesitated, then he shrugged. "Thank you, Mist' Clyde. Hitch up the mule, if'n you want me to." Catfish went around the side of the house, and Tuckie fell in behind him.

Clyde looked at the doctor. The old man stared at the rotted boards on the steps. Clyde knew all at once that the doctor and Catfish were frightened. He searched himself for fear,

but he found none. It was strange not to feel frightened. Now that he wasn't frightened, it didn't seem possible that he'd been afraid so much of his life.

"I'll go in with you — to the courthouse, I mean," the doctor said. "Don't mind going. Anyhow, it's the

law. Got to make out death certificates."

"No need for you to go, if'n you ain't a-want to," Clyde said. "Reckon I can tell 'em how he got kilt."

"Got to go," the doctor said. His face was empty and still and gray. "It's the law."

SCHOOL TEACHER

BY CHARLES ANGOFF

For forty-five years
She taught boys and girls
To read, write, and
Recite "Evangeline."

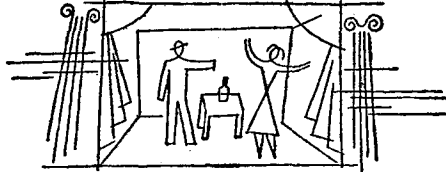
For forty-five years
Of evenings, Sundays and holidays
She waited for the
Warm miracle of love.

But the years
And all their men
Bowed politely,
And cruelly
Passed her by.

On her retirement
The school gave her
A pure silk scarf.
Late that night
She hanged herself with it.
Four days later
She was buried with it.

THE THEATRE

by GEORGE JEAN NATHAN



RANDOM MEMORANDA

Boudoir Note. One of the impressive differences between American and English sex comedy is that in the former the hero and heroine finally go to bed together, sentimentally, and that in the latter the hero avoids it, wittily.

Endings. It is a weakness of the great majority of modern comedies that their endings are too neatly resolved and tied up in trim packages with pretty ribbons. Life and the better comedies are not like that. Life has a way of leaving things unraveled, and observant comedy playwrights have that way as well, as, among others, Schnitzler has attested in *Anatol*, Henry Arthur Jones in *The Case of Rebellious Susan*, and Molnár in *The Guardsman*. Most playwrights may be reminded that there remains after all a somewhat greater virtue in Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* than in the completed score of *Toplitzky of Notre Dame*, in the unfinished *Faust* of Goethe than in the fully rounded *I*

Gotta Get Out of Joe Fields, and maybe in even Dickens' uncompleted *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* than in the done up brown *Duet for Two Hands* of Mary Hayley Bell.

Suggestion to Producers. Those of our producers who are fetched by propaganda plays and plays of social significance, and who usually pick out the kind that make a soapbox blush for itself, may perhaps be interested in one, and a very good one with a rich contemporary angle, that they apparently have not yet heard about. I refer to *The Acharnians*, written 425 years before the birth of Christ by a fellow named Aristophanes. The plot: A good-natured countryman is driven from his village home by enemy invasion. Though a peace to end the war is possible, his government dallies for so long over details that he gets good and sick of the delay and in disgust dispatches a personal envoy to the enemy to effect a separate peace for himself and his family. The envoy is successful; the enemy government pleasedly sends him back with lots of

booze for the mutual ratification of the truce; and the old boy gets a fine celebrating edge on and rosily returns to his home — just in time to participate in the feast of Bacchus.

I tender my check for a dozen tickets down front on the opening night.

Prophecy. In three plays written some years ago and not yet produced in the American professional theatre, the great but neglected Irish dramatist, Sean O'Casey, indicated a strange prophetic vision. In *The Star Turns Red* he wrote of the coming spread of Communism. In *Purple Dust* he foretold the collapse of England. And in *Red Roses for Me* he predicted the economic advances accomplished by Labour.

Reasons. There has been wide speculation on the inactivity of many of our leading playwrights. Among the reasons commonly assigned are the personal uncertainty in view of the confusion of the times, the lure of Hollywood, the indifference of our producers to really good work, etc., etc. Some of these reasons may be partly sound. But there are two other reasons, and quite obvious ones, that nobody seems to have mentioned. The first is that the playwrights in point have already made enough money not to have to worry and that, with income taxes as heavy as they are, they do not see why they should make more only to lose it. They figure that, if lean days should overtake them, it is

better to keep their ideas and plays in reserve. The second is that the theatre and many of its present critics, like the rest of America, place an over-value on mere commercial success, and so keep the better and more ambitious dramatists from gambling their resources on plays which, however meritorious, may in all likelihood miss such success and, in the missing, reflect on them and their theatrical standing. I am not criticizing the playwrights; there is a lot to be said for the position they take. When esteem becomes the portion of honorable failure as it currently is the portion of cheap success, things may be different.

Fantasy. Our theatre has advanced considerably in at least one respect. No longer, as in past days, is stage direction in plays of fantasy of the bogusly imaginative kind which sought to top fancy with fancy by making the actors behave as if they had been out on a six-day binge with Maeterlinck and were still in the hangover state where they were not sure whether they were themselves or Peaseblossom. The alcoholic metaphor similarly and gratifyingly no longer includes the sort of staging which the war-refugee Russian and German directors were fond of visiting upon certain specimens of their native dramatic art. It was their idea, as will be painfully recalled, that authentic dramatic stylization was to be accomplished simply by placing upon a platform a pair of large screens that looked as if they had been up all night drinking,

were in the incipient stages of delirium tremens, and were about to fall under the table, and by inserting between them groups of actors instructed to comport themselves as if they were seized alternately by violent attacks of epilepsy and paralysis. Even had the plays themselves been half-way acceptable, their effect would still have been demolished by the directors' transmutation of the characters into actors so hammy that one could not stifle one's chuckles on beholding them popping out their eyes like Peter Lorre, gesticulating like so many French traffic cops, leaping and bounding about the stage like the late Lew Morrison's Mephistopheles, and then suddenly relapsing into a semblance of Nance O'Neil rigor mortis.

Vocal Note. Among the most intolerable actors are those elocutionary relics from another era who indulge themselves throughout a play rolling dice with their voices.

Constructive Item. There is nothing wrong with the American theatre in general that a few assiduous scrub-women and several coats of fresh paint can't help partly to rectify.

Criticism. Dramatic criticism is the craft of superimposing the critic's logical prejudices on the emotional prejudices of the dramatist.

Chesterton. The late Gilbert K. Chesterton, though few of his admirers, I

believe, are aware of it, once essayed for an English provincial newspaper the rôle of dramatic critic and proved himself very apt at it. The occasion was a reply to the practising critics of the time who had found fault with his venture into dramaturgy, the play called *Magic*. Since it has never to my knowledge been printed in this country, I here quote from it at length, in the conviction that it should prove instructive to those of our American playwrights like Maxwell Anderson, Clifford Odets, *et al.*, who have worked themselves into a mighty indignation and rancor when critics have similarly found fault with their exhibits.

"The author of *Magic*," wrote Chesterton, "ought to be told plainly that his play, like most other efforts of that person, has been treated with far too much indulgence in the public press. I will glide mercifully over the more glaring errors, which the critics have overlooked — as that no Irishman could become so complete a cad merely by going to America; that no young lady would walk about in the rain so soon before it was necessary to dress for dinner; that no young man, however American, could run around a duke's grounds in the time between one bad epigram and another; that dukes never allow the middle classes to encroach on their gardens so as to permit a doctor's lamp to be seen there; that no sister, however eccentric, could conduct a slightly frivolous love scene with a brother going mad in the next room; that the secretary

disappears halfway through the play without explaining himself; and that the conjuror disappears at the end with almost equal dignity. Such are the candid criticisms I should address to Mr. G. K. Chesterton were he my friend. But as I have always found him my worst enemy, I will confine myself to the criticism which seems to me most fundamental and final.

"Of course, I shall not differ from any of the dramatic critics: I am bursting with pride to think that I am (for the first time) a dramatic critic myself. Besides, I never argue except when I am right. It is rather a curious coincidence that in every controversy in which I have been hitherto I have always been entirely right. But if I pretended for one moment that *Magic* was not a badly written play, I should be entirely wrong. I may be allowed to point out the secret of its badness.

"By the exercise of that knowledge of all human hearts which descends on any man (however unworthy) the moment he is a dramatic critic, I perceive that the author of *Magic* originally wrote it as a short story. It is a bad play because it was a good short story. In a short story of mystery, as in a Sherlock Holmes story, the author and the hero (or villain) keep the reader out of the secret. Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes know all about it; and everybody else feels as silly as Watson. But the drama is built on that grander secrecy which was called the Greek irony. In the drama the audience must know the truth when the actors do not know it. That is

where the drama is truly democratic; not because the audience shouts, but because it knows — and is silent. Now I do quite seriously think it is a weakness in a play like *Magic* that the audience is not in the central secret from the start. Mr. G. S. Street put the point with his usual unerring simplicity by saying that he could not help feeling disappointed with the conjuror because he had hoped he would turn into the devil. If any one knows any real answer to this genuine and germane criticism, I will see that it is conveyed to the author.

"There are two more criticisms of which I will take note, because they can best be dealt with by an impartial critic like myself. The first concerns that paralysis of the mind which scientists now call Pragmatism, and which is represented in this play as freezing for an instant the intellect of an Anglican priest. I know it is ignominious to talk of artistic aims that aim and do not hit. But the idea of the skepticism of the priest was perfectly simple. It was that there should be no faith or fancy left to support the supernatural, but only the experience of it. There is one man who believes — and he believes so strongly that he wishes he didn't. . . .

"The other criticism which the present critic may criticize is the frequent observation that a soliloquy is old-fashioned — and by 'old-fashioned' they always mean artificial or unnatural. Now, I should say that a soliloquy is the most natural thing in the world. It is no more artificial than

a conscience or a habit of walking about the room. I constantly talk to myself. If a man does not talk to himself it is because he is not worth talking to. Soliloquy is simply the strength and liberty of the soul, without which each man of us would be like that nobleman in one of the most brilliant and bizarre of Mr. Henry James' tales who did not exist at all except when others were present. Every man ought to be able to argue with himself. And I have tried to do it in this article."

Bad Acting. The theatre in its character of a mere purveyor of amusement sometimes profits very much more from bad acting than good. A play so dreadful in every particular that its entertainment quotient is nil may occasionally be made the stuff of considerable jollity by acting even more atrocious than the play itself. Where good acting would only point up its awfulness, really terrible acting contributes to it some hilarity. Some of the most thoroughly amusing evenings I have spent in the theatre have been at bad plays even worse acted. For example, *The Love Call*, *Boudoir*, *House of Doom*, *A Strange Play*, *They Walk Alone*, *Brother Cain*, and, by all means, *Curtain Call*, with the memorable performance by Guido Nadzo that brought down the house. The operators of the old river showboats, of the tank-town Tom companies and, later, of such travestied melodramas as *The Drunkard* weren't fools. They knew that the money of cus-

tomers who howl with mirth at ham acting is just as good as that of customers who find satisfaction only in the better grade.

Chanteuses. Edith Piaf, the chanteuse who was recently imported from la belle France to display her gifts to local audiences, is a small, chunky woman with tousled reddish hair, heavily mascara'd eyes, and a mouth made up to look like a quart of tomato juice. According to a quotation from one Schoenbrun in the playbills, "She is the particular favorite of the midinette, the charwoman, the poor student, the factory worker, the millions of pale, thin girls who live gray, toil-worn lives. Piaf is each one of them. When *La Môme*, as she is known, sings of her cold-water flat, her 'cracked walls and gondola bed,' she is moaning for all of them. When Piaf finds a lover who holds her in his arms and turns her miserable room into a palace, you can hear the sighs of happiness from the crowded music hall as each Parisienne finds escape with Piaf."

Very probably. For there can be small doubt that our visitor has the forlorn appearance and melancholy mien, sedulously accentuated by shabby dress and the other accepted stage concomitants of poverty, which always companionably impress the emotions of counterparts in life. And that impression is automatically deepened by a voice which, whatever the nature of the song, cultivates the pitch and tone of gully despair. So

much may be granted Piaf. But, for all the fact that she seems to have been very successful in liquefying her French clientele, not quite so much may be granted her on the score of any real artistry. She sings all songs much alike. There is scarcely any change in emotional pattern, or in expression, or in projection. One and all begin in a low key and mount gradually into a terrific abdominal and laryngeal explosion, accompanied either by the pointing of the index finger at the audience or by the extension of the arms laterally. And all are sold with the same set woe-begone look, the same set air of heart-broken but brave defeat.

The repertory, as has been intimated, is, furthermore, largely the standard boulevard one: the song about *l'amour*, the song about the married woman retracing the joys and sorrows of her tragic life, the one

about the little merry-go-round in the park in the days when the singer was happy, the other one about the street instrumental player, and so on.

That returning American voyagers often go overboard in their testimonials to such singers is an old story. It is also an understandable one, in a manner. The impulse to over-rate a performer whom one has heard in some out of the way little spot in a foreign country and whom one feels one has oneself surprisingly discovered is common to most travelers, particularly those who have wandered out into the Paris night with a few drinks under their belts and, possibly, with a pretty girl to hold hands with while the singer is sighing of love. Under such circumstances, Piaf would undoubtedly do. But on the stage of a cold-sober theatre in a colder and more critical land I fear that her appeal misses something.

TO KNOW WORDS

BY MAY WILLIAMS WARD

To know a word it is not enough
 To recognize its serrate shape
 Upon a page, or to speak with care
 All its syllables justly.
 But from endless blowing of prairie wind
 Is learned whole meanings of many words:
 Glare . . . force . . . monotony . . .
 Loneliness . . . diminishment. . . .
 Selfhood goes blank in a trance of wind;
 Wind seems to spell . . . forever.

THE ARMY AND NAVY JOURNAL

BY WILLIAM HINES AND EDWARD COTTRELL

The *Army and Navy Journal* is established in the interests of no party; it will be controlled by no clique. Its independence will be absolute. Avoiding all personal and political bias, its influence will be directed solely to the inculcation of sound military ideas, and to the elevation of the public service in all its departments.

THUS, on August 29, 1863, the *Army and Navy Journal* stated its aims.

Eighty-four years later, with its policy, price and format unchanged, it is the most widely read military news publication in circulation. Though its publisher, John Callan O'Laughlin, admits readily that it is a trade journal, of a piece, from the trade angle, with the *Corset and Underwear Review* or the *Hatchery Tribune*, its eight decades of military reporting have elevated the *Journal* to semi-official status in the national press. General Pershing's assertion that "the *Army and Navy Journal* is the true historian of the Nation and its defense" has done nothing to harm that status.

There is little to recommend the

Journal to the casual reader. Like olives or pomegranates, the paper is largely an acquired taste, but while olives and pomegranates titillate the taste-buds, probably the most exciting thing about the *Journal* is the baleful eagle which has straddled the top of the front page since Civil War days. It is perhaps significant of the *Journal's* ways, unchanging as Army doctrine, that when the eagle wore out on the original masthead, no new eagle was designed and engraved to take its place. Instead, O'Laughlin caused the front page of Vol. I, No. 1, to be shot and a line-engraving made from the impression of the original bird.

A man does not become a *Journal* reporter overnight. First — since he has picked up many strange habits, including the use of adjectives, in his years on daily newspapers — he must learn the style of this extraordinary sheet. It was several years before Chester Farnham, the *Journal's* ace — and only — Army Department reporter, drew the ultimate compli-

WILLIAM HINES has done reporting and editorial work for a wide variety of papers all over the country. He was an Army officer for four years during the war, and is at present copy editor for the Army Public Information Division. EDWARD COTTRELL is employed in the War Department's Information Division as a specialist in the Press Section. He was formerly a correspondent for the New York Times and many other newspapers.

ment from his editor: "Now you're doing it, Chester. Your stuff is beginning to sound like a War Department Circular." Several million former Army men will know without further explanation what literary peak the capable Mr. Farnham had then attained.

But it should be said in justice to the *Journal* that while its columns lack the zing of a Winchell piece, and its subject matter leaves a clear field to the gaudier tabloids, the paper is rarely guilty of the ambiguity and circumlocution which so often leave Army circulars open to "interpretation." In short, when the *Journal* says it, it has been said, and plainly. If you know the Army, you'll understand the *Journal*; if you don't, there's little reason for reading it.

Though the popular fiction is that military change-of-station orders are the only things printed in the *Journal*, actually these cabalistic bits of intelligence fill only about 23 per cent of the paper's total space each week. A sample order:

Maj. Gen. William B. Kean is reld fr asgmt and dy w/Hq 1st Army, Governors Is., NY, eff 1 Oct, and is asgd to 5th Div, Ft. Jackson, SC for dy as div comdr.

While such an entry might evoke from the casual reader a baffled "What the hell?" the *Journal* follower makes sense out of it, as he does of another order, this time Navy:

Henry W. Wickes, jr., NOp, to Assist to DirTrVOiAR 1st NDist, Boston, duty with NARTrProg.

Also sensible to the *Journal* subscriber is the paper's practice of numbering its pages serially by volume rather than by issue. In no wise disconcerting to him is the jump line on the front page of a 24-page issue: "Please turn to Page 1385."

Just as no one feels himself officially transferred until his name gets in the *Journal*, many an Army babe hangs in a state between the fetal and the sapient for two or three weeks until the crowded vital statistics columns of the *Journal* carry the "official" announcement of his birth. And a newlywed Army couple would think themselves living in sin if they set up housekeeping before the nuptials were recorded in the "Spokesman of the Services," as the *Journal* unblushingly terms itself.

A pair of editorials set two columns wide and unmarred by paragraph indentations (regardless of their length), comprise half the editorial page. Adjoining is a single column of "Service Humor," and rounding out this page are half-columns of answers to questions from readers under a standing head, "Ask the *Journal*," and recollections of bygone years called, "In the *Journal*." The latter department picks up items one, ten, 25, 50 and 80 years old. It recently quoted an 1867 issue:

Boating and baseball have broken out among the cadets at West Point. . . . It is gratifying to see these more manly sports engaging the attention of cadets, and to state that the barbarous practice of "devilling the plebes" has become extinct.

II

Journal staffers write in anonymity. The only byline in each issue goes to an Army or Navy brass hat writing in Column one of Page one.

Since bedroom notes of the Winchell type are more appropriate to a General Court Martial charge sheet than to a military newspaper, the *Journal* eschews columns, as it does the cleaner frivolities of crossword puzzles and comic strips. The only gossip in the paper, aside from social notes from all over, is gossip in name only. Typical cullings from the weekly two-page spread of "Service News and Gossip":

The War Department has issued the following message concerning the monetary allowances of enlisted Reservists. . . .

Brig. Gen. Lewis A. Pick . . . received an Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a second D. S. M.

The *Journal* would as soon carry an editorial praising the Comintern as a cheesecake photograph, but it nevertheless manages each week to gratify its readers' demand for a pretty face by running one photo of an attractive bride or bride-to-be. This is the eye-catcher for "Service Social News" which, unlike the rest of the paper, sometimes varies widely from the objective ideal, as when it states flatly that "General of the Army and Mrs. Eisenhower have been enjoying a visit from their son and his bride," "Secretary of War Patterson enjoyed the National Holiday by flying up to the Hudson River Valley," and "One

of the prettiest weddings in the Pacific theatre this summer was at the Camp Hakata Chapel, Kyushu, Japan." Any of these items, recorded on other pages of the *Journal*, would at least quote the authority for the statement that the General and the Secretary enjoyed themselves or that the Kyushu nuptials were pretty.

The social notes column, though, is one of the rare leavens for the generally heavy reading in the *Journal's* pages. The paper out-*Timeses* the New York *Times* in the printing of texts. When Billy Mitchell was being court-martialed, the transcript of his trial was run *in toto*, and hardly a week goes by in these times of military transition without a long and involved text being run, often as not with clarifying charts.

The "Spokesman of the Services" started life as an eleven-by-fourteen-inch, three-column sheet. Several years later it went to four columns without changing its size; and has retained this format ever since.

In the hiatus between the death of the *Journal's* founder, William C. Church, and its acquisition by O'Laughlin, the *Journal* appeared with only a vague regularity. True, it came out every week — and it has not missed an issue since its founding — but in that period it was anyone's guess whether press time would come on Tuesday or Friday. Nowadays, no Saturday rolls around without copies reaching the desks of Bradley, Denfeld and Spaatz.

The enviable publication record of

the *Journal* almost ended one tragicomic Christmas eve in the early twenties. Printing then, as now, in Baltimore, the paper had been locked into a large sixteen-page form in the composing room for delivery to a flatbed press in the basement. The route to the press room was *via* an elevator shaft, where a block-and-tackle lowered the heavy form of type. Scores of man-hours of labor involved in composition, makeup and lockup went down the shaft in a matter of seconds when the tackle gave way and deposited sixteen pages of pi at the bottom. An all-night session with the page proofs saved the day, and the big flatbed was running by sun-up.

As this article was being prepared, a printers' strike at Baltimore threatened the *Journal's* publishing record. Should the walk-out materialize, the peppery O'Laughlin has a ready answer: "I'll take it up to Brooklyn and let a friend of mine print it there." Powerful as it is, the International Typographical Union hardly qualifies as a fit opponent for a man who in his day has taken on the whole Soviet press.

When, in the winter of 1944-45, American troops were taking a ferocious lambasting in the Ardennes, O'Laughlin noted in his Foreign Affairs column, an irregular *Journal* feature, that the Red Army was stalling in its drive on Berlin in order to move into the Balkan countries. "Historically," he observed, "the route to Berlin lies through Poland."

A few more terse remarks dismissed the Russians' apparent use of war as an instrument of national policy.

In Moscow the big guns went off. *Izvestia* called the *Journal* "that ugly paper." *Red Star* termed it a "source of pro-Hitlerite propaganda" — at a time when a fair half of the *Journal's* readers were battling the *Fuehrer* on his own grounds. But what the septuagenarian O'Laughlin disliked most of all was *Pravda's* crack about "the juvenile military experts of the notorious *Army and Navy Journal*" — hardly an apt description of the man who had scored a beat on the world press in reporting for the *Chicago Tribune* the end of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. Scorning a feud with the Russians, O'Laughlin gruffly told the *Washington Star*: "If it is pro-Hitlerite to want to save American lives, then I'm pro-Hitler." Characteristically, too, the *Journal* waived comment when events proved a merciless lampooning by *Time* magazine to have been in error. The *Journal* had scooped the world on the selection of Marshall as commander in the European theatre and editorially in the same issue had deplored the decision to move the Chief of Staff. *Time* sneered when official confirmation of the selection report was not forthcoming. However, the postwar memoir crop established that Marshall's appointment had been decided upon and then revoked at the last minute. Even in the prideful precincts of 1711 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, no one has yet declared that the *Journal*

editorial caused the change of decision.

Its failure to call the turn — even years later — on *Time* is rather typical of the *Journal*. Even its method of boasting about its scoops is self-effacing. Instead of labeling exclusive stories as news beats, it waits until the following week, when at the bottom of Page three, Column three, it asks: "Did you read so-and-so? If not, you did not read the *Army and Navy Journal*."

III

Getting the *Journal* to its readers is a project typical of the magazine's approach to journalism. While O'Laughlin refuses to solicit subscriptions except among new officers of the Regular Army and Navy, his staff goes to great lengths to bring these lambs into the fold. As a result, the metaphorical doghouse in the Pentagon where naughty newspapermen are kept, was occupied one week by *Journal* men. Unwittingly, so O'Laughlin swears, a release date was broken on announcement of the appointment of 9000 new officers in the Army; not, strangely enough, in the paper's columns, but through the mails. This came about when a *Journal* janitor mailed several bags of subscription literature to the new appointees before the Adjutant General had given them official notification.

It wasn't the first time that the *Journal* had been in dutch through inadvertency. During the war there was a more serious incident: the Army and

Navy had published a confidential book entitled *Army-Navy Journal of Recognition*, a manual illustrating the ships and planes of both friend and foe. As units moved overseas, they properly got rid of their confidential documents, but — many of the units mailed their recognition manuals to the *Army and Navy Journal*! The paper soon was in possession of scores of these documents, each one hotter than a pistol, because the law forbade civilians to possess military secrets. Applying the military tenet that the best defense is a good offense, the *Journal* stormed Army and Navy headquarters and, slamming the confidential books on the desks of admirals and generals, pointed to the title and spoke bitingly of copyright violation. The services were happy to take the books off the *Journal's* hands, hush the whole thing up and, at considerable cost, reprint the volumes under another title.

Reminiscing of this and other brushes he has had with the armed forces, O'Laughlin once said reflectively, "I wonder what kind of dossier Military Intelligence has on the *Journal*."

Actually, it is unlikely that O'Laughlin has ever lost sight of the fact that the *Journal* grew out of the formation, in February 1863, of the Loyal Publication Society in New York, whose aim was "the distribution of journals and documents of unquestionable loyalty." This creed stemmed from the practice of newspapers on both sides, during the Civil

War, of headlining military plans and strategy that today would rate "top secret" classification. For example, in 1864 one New York City daily revealed the exact strength of Sherman's army and outlined his projected march to the sea. A rival daily a few months later disclosed that Sherman would strike through Goldsboro — where the Confederates subsequently massed troops and fought stubbornly. Such journalistic shenanigans prompted Sherman to comment on the battle deaths of three correspondents by saying, "Good! Now we'll have the news from hell before breakfast."

Groups similar to the Loyal Publication Society sprang up in a number of other cities and added to the clamor for a publication thoroughly devoted to the interests of the military services. Consequently, when Captain William C. Church resigned from the Union Army to publish the *Journal* he found a tailor-made audience. With many readers paying for as many as 100 copies in advance, Church later said the future of the paper had been assured within three months of its first issue.

In his first editorial, Church forecast the reaction which would follow the Civil War, writing: "... We readily foresee how strong the temptations to a relapse will be — how strong will be the attempts, through the machinery of partisan politics, operating on the passions and interests of men quick to forget the lesson when the material occasion is removed,

... The *United States Army and Navy Journal* is designed as an arena on which this contest may be fought."

There has been no apparent change of heart by the *Journal* under Publisher O'Laughlin. Over a period of years he and the services have arrived at a mellow *modus vivendi* which is expressed by the present-day *Journal* as, "what's good for the services is good for us." Though O'Laughlin is a life-long Republican (he was an Assistant Secretary of State under Teddy Roosevelt) and a personal friend of Herbert Hoover, the *Journal* assailed Hoover in print every time he directed another cut in the armed forces' budget. The *Journal* owner's bitter personal feeling toward FDR is an open secret, but the *Journal* backed the New Deal in direct proportion to its advocacy of military spending. Whatever the current policy (generally favorable) toward the Truman administration, the *Journal* will not engage in political discussions in 1948.

IV

Air power has long been extolled by the *Journal* as a prerequisite to military fitness, and it has stumped for strength in the sky since before the Billy Mitchell era. Its first item dealing with the subject appeared on January 23, 1864, when the *Journal* reported:

An ingenious but visionary rebel claims to have invented a flying machine, which may be used with terrible effect against an enemy. He calls it the "Artisavis," or

"Bird of Art," and he believes that by the use of a considerable number of them all the Yankee armies now on Confederate soil and all their blockading fleets may be driven off or destroyed. To effect this, he proposes to station a thousand of these machines at a distance of five miles from the hostile camp or fleet, and send them thence into the air, each armed with a 50-pound explosive shell, to be dropped from a safe elevation upon the enemy! . . . The inventor believes that in this manner an army or fleet could be destroyed in a very few hours.

O'Laughlin can be a Cassandra when he wants to. He sees (shades of Publisher Church!) the United States defense establishment wasting away in the next few years, and another Pearl Harbor situation at the start of the next conflict. When the next war will start, or why a war with Russia should start, the *Journal* does not know. It looks on the two nations as interdependent and, De-Tocqueville to the contrary notwithstanding, cannot envision war as inevitable. But it is viewed as possible in the event of some unforeseeable inflammatory "incident."

A few weeks ago a \$40 check reached O'Laughlin's desk and sent him into a rage. It came from an American officer in Greece who wanted his *Journal* air-mailed. The check was for a year of the paper: \$5 for the *Journal*; \$35 for postage. The *Journal* also has several \$20 subscribers throughout the world, and all this money rolling in is, to O'Laughlin's mind, scandalous. At present, *Journal* representatives are fighting with the Army Postal Serv-

ice, trying to get the rates lowered and delivery time reduced to all APO addresses.

Remote subscribers are an old story to the *Journal*, as are faithful ones. A year or so ago, a woman of nearly ninety wrote in:

I learned my ABC's from the *Journal*. My mother taught me to read by pointing out the alphabet in copies of the *Journal* that were pasted up to keep the wind out of our quarters at an Indian post in the west about 80 years ago.

Captain Church had Army families, as well as Army officers, in mind when he started his paper in 1863. For many families it was their only reading matter aside from the Bible and the Articles of War. Through the years it has continued as a family newspaper, given to publication of service news and military orders for father, social notes and vital statistics for mother, and a column of antiseptic jokes for the kiddies. Frequent sly attacks by readers on the chastity of the "Service Humor" column have so far failed to produce anything more eyebrow-raising than this joke in the issue of September 6, 1947:

COMMANDING OFFICER: Smith, the first sergeant reports that a bottle of rye and a bottle of ginger ale were found in your locker. What do you make of that?
SMITH: Highballs, sir.

This sort of thing, fairly ripe for the *Journal*, is strictly chaplain's reading for the Fort Belvoir (Va.) *Castle*, a post paper from which the joke was clipped. In the raucous new *Army*

Times, a would-be rival of the *Journal*, such a joke would not find houseroom; the *Times* prefers somewhat saltier humor, such as the time-honored soldier's reply to the officer's question about whether romance is all play or partly work: "Well, sir, I figure it must be all play, because if there was any work attached to it you'd have the enlisted men doing it for you."

The aforementioned *Times*, the *Army and Navy Register* and a paper called *Armed Forces* compete rather futilely for the *Journal's* market. The *Register* comes closest to ringing the bell. However, its circulation is only about half of the *Journal's* 35,000, and it is considered more a Navy than an Army paper.

Regardless of the policies of the various service journals, all of them (except the new and relatively untried *Armed Forces*) show something of the *Journal's* influence, if only because the *Journal* has been their source of key personnel. The *Times'* John Slinkman and the *Register's* George Carll, two of Washington's outstandingly Army-wise newsmen, have employment histories which include stretches on the *Journal*. Their coverage of the Army reflects the *Journal's* careful handling of the news, though their articles are seldom played up similarly to the *Journal's*.

Unlike the sensational *Times*, the *Journal* rarely tosses down the gage. Rather it watches — and waits. It is waiting now to see how the Army administers its new promotion law,

and *Journal* staffers promise to blow the whistle if results are not strictly within the spirit of the legislation.

If the *Journal's* whistle is ever blown on the Army, it will make a noise loud out of all proportion to the paper's circulation. A survey made in mid-1947 indicated that about 900,000 persons see the 35,000 copies of each *Journal* issue. The Washington press corps keeps a sharp eye on the *Journal's* columns, and Congress listens when the eagle on page one shrieks.

O'Laughlin, at 74, has retained his mental and physical vigor so well that his staffers, half his age, complain that "if we followed through on all the Old Man's ideas the paper would be as thick as *Fortune* every week." O'Laughlin gives indication of realizing this when he refers to fortyish LeRoy Whitman, the *Journal's* editor, as the paper's balance wheel. Whitman, who in his early twenties ruled the Washington *Post* city desk, maintains equilibrium between news and paper availability. Making the *Journal* ready for the press is no small problem. Liaison between Connecticut Avenue and Baltimore is maintained by a combination of three services, the mails, the Greyhound Bus Lines, and a lethargic colored go-between who hustles galley proofs from Baltimore to Washington and back. O'Laughlin, unlike Luce, boasts no leased wire circuits to carry news from the editorial room to the printshop.

Unlike virtually all other service

publications, the *Journal's* circulation chart shows a steady increase despite the ballooning of the armed forces during the war and their collapse in strength after V-J Day. Today Publisher O'Laughlin and Editor Whitman are seriously concerned over the danger that the circulation may soon reach a top limit, which probably lies somewhere this side of 50,000. With a present potential readership of 40,000 officers in the Regular Army and 25,000 in the Regular Navy, the *Journal's* problem may become acute.

In the advertising department, the *Journal* can afford to be choosy, and is. Many would-be advertisers are turned away because their products are not suitable to the *Journal's* pages, or because their business standing is not of the best. Apparently *Journal* ads get results; a Washington liquor dealer doing business as "Harry's" has used a quarter-page weekly since Prohibition died. He claims to sell more merchandise to *Journal* readers than to readers of the local dailies. This may be attributable to one of several factors: the military man's enjoyment of a short one, his relatively high average pay, Harry's weekly special "for the armed forces only," or somebody's blithe disregard for a Federal prohibition against liquor in government buildings. Weekly in his ad, Harry states that he will deliver "to your home or office anywhere in the District of Columbia."

The *Journal's* advertising department has its field day on those all-too-rare occasions when an anniversary

or a Memorable Date can be celebrated. During the war these lucrative opportunities came annually on Pearl Harbor Day; nine years ago a 75th-Anniversary issue was put out, and perhaps next year the 85th milestone will 'be duly celebrated in a thick, slick volume.

The latest of these specials, the "United States at War" issue of December 7, 1945, was a 216-page book with full page ads from some of the country's biggest firms and signed articles by men whose written word is ordinarily expensive but free to the *Journal*: Robert E. Sherwood, Harold L. Ickes, John R. Deane, and Admiral Halsey, as well as pieces by such personages as Forrestal, Leahy, Marshall, King, Arnold, Vinson, Clark, Wallace, Spaatz and Mitscher. Most of the articles were ghost-written, to be sure, but in a workmanlike manner. They gave the magazine a tone. All had the ring of sincerity, and the most sincere of all was one which read in part:

A singular instance of the trust with which the Congress left its responsibility for national expenditure in the hands of the military leaders is the authorization of about \$2,000,000,000 for an object which was not designated. . . .

It should not be inferred, however . . . that the attitude of Congress has been one of negligent carelessness. Congress has . . . kept a watchful eye on many matters involving the expenditure of large sums of money. . . .

The article was signed by Andrew J. May, Chairman of the House Military Affairs Committee.

FACTS ABOUT RHEUMATIC FEVER

BY BEATRICE BORST

UNTIL recently a diagnosis of rheumatic fever carried with it the certainty of premature death or invalidism. Baffled medical authorities were unable to discover the cause of the disease. Even worse, they couldn't prevent the recurrent attacks which eventually crippled the victim's heart. If a patient survived a severe, acute attack of rheumatic fever, he could look forward only to years of invalidism. What happened to his mental outlook depended largely upon his religion or his ability to develop a compensating philosophy of life. Too often his personality, like his heart, became crippled. Since children were the main victims, the results were especially tragic.

Today, the prospects are rapidly changing. Rheumatic fever is no longer considered hopeless. Its cause is still as much a mystery as the causes of cancer and infantile paralysis, but medical science is learning to prevent recurrences of the disease. Doctors now believe that if rheumatic fever can be diagnosed in time for the patient to receive proper care, he may recover without permanent injury to

his heart. If he is left with an enlarged heart, he can learn by self-imposed restrictions to live a satisfying and useful life. It is only a matter of time until the cause and cure are determined.

The symptoms of rheumatic fever are not easy to identify. The disease most frequently follows a cold, sore throat or scarlet fever. At first the only signs may be those of a chronic infection: there may be loss of appetite, lack of pep, weakness, listlessness, paleness, sweating and a slight afternoon temperature. Then pain may develop in one joint after another. Nosebleeds are frequent symptoms. The victim may also develop a rash which will spread over the arms and chest, while small lumps appear under the skin near the joints or in the back of the head. The skin will show pale red or bluish-red ringlets of various sizes. These fade out in 18 to 24 hours, but they may return.

If an acute attack strikes, the victim's fever runs high. His joints will become swollen and stiff. Chorea or St. Vitus dance, a lack of muscular control, may develop, and the move-

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ments of his face, arms and legs will become jerky. A cardiologist, called in for consultation, will order X-Rays, an electrocardiogram and blood tests. The diagnosis is rheumatic fever. Perhaps the patient will be told he is lucky, that the diagnosis has been made in time. If he stays in bed for several months, his damaged heart will have a chance to heal. But this will not end his worry. He is warned that for years he must take care not to get over-tired or catch cold. If he is careless, he is likely to have a relapse.

A disheartening feature of this disease is that with each attack a person's susceptibility increases. Young children, who are most vulnerable between six and seven years of age, may have recurrent attacks every year for five or six years. Only in 25 per cent of the cases does the first attack injure the heart permanently. If proper care and rest are taken until all rheumatic symptoms disappear, the heart will return to normal and the child can resume his ordinary living habits. But if other attacks follow, the heart will become permanently damaged.

What actually happens to the heart? During an acute attack of rheumatic fever, the infection will strike the valves, or, in severe attacks, even the covering of the heart, thus causing inflammations which can lead to structural damage. As the heart is weakened, it grows enlarged. It will become smaller again when the fever subsides, but usually some of the enlargement remains permanently. One

or more of the four sets of valves may be injured by the infection. When the infection departs, these valves will heal by means of scar tissue. It is this scar tissue which actually deforms the valves and keeps them from closing properly, resulting in a so-called heart leakage. The problem is to prevent further heart damage by constantly watching for reactivation of the infection. A period of active infection may last months or even years. Once it has subsided, it may again flare up following a cold or pharyngitis. The danger is not that rheumatic fever will cause rheumatic heart disease: the fever itself is the enemy which kills. The acute stage may develop rapidly, and death can occur in a few days or weeks. Usually, however, it takes months or even years, with periods of acute and subacute illness.

II

Rheumatic fever is mainly a disease of childhood, though adults and adolescents do get it. In 1943-44 the Army reported 18,000 cases, the Navy 15,000. In the years between five and 24, seventeen people have it out of every 1000. But school children are the real victims. In the United States today, 500,000 children either have rheumatic fever or have had it. Dr. Homer Swift of the Rockefeller Institute says it kills more children between the ages of five and nineteen than any other known disease. It is the second commonest cause of death in young people between nineteen and

24. In New York City alone there are approximately 7000 cases each year. Records for 1938 show that rheumatic fever killed 4.5 times more children than whooping cough, scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria, epidemic meningitis and infantile paralysis combined. In the northern part of the country it ranks next to tuberculosis and syphilis as a chronic, infectious disease.

Rheumatic fever may be a single disease or a group of diseases; a symptom complex like bronchial asthma, a reaction to a variety of agents, or a series of untoward, late reactions brought on by hemolytic streptococci. Medical science is unable to assign its cause yet. But environment undoubtedly plays an important part. Rheumatic fever is more common in cities than in rural areas. Also it occurs more frequently in low-income groups where living conditions are crowded, houses are damp, food is poor and clothing inadequate. Heredity also appears to be a factor. In a small percentage of cases, both parents of rheumatic fever children have had the disease. Racial susceptibility or resistance is uncertain. In New York City, for example, the Irish seem to get it more easily than other groups. Negroes do not acquire the disease more readily than whites, but their mortality rate is higher. Climate also appears to be important. Many more cases develop in the Rocky Mountain areas and in northern states than farther south. A cold and wet-weather disease, it reaches its peak in March

and April in New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Minneapolis and all of New England. In January and February it strikes Oklahoma, Northern California and Oregon. In England November is the bad month.

III

Just as there is no known cause of rheumatic fever, so there is no known cure. Doctors and scientific researchers throughout the country have tried sulpha drugs without much success. Salicylates often help in the acute stage. Sulfadiazene, tested in the Army Air Forces as a preventive measure, reduced streptococcus respiratory infections. The effect of this treatment on the rheumatic fever which might have followed is problematical. Although penicillin does not appear to help in the acute stage, researchers are checking thoroughly the possibility that it may prevent recurrence of the disease. Irvington House, a convalescent home for rheumatic fever children, located at Irvington-on-the-Hudson, has for the past two years conducted a study to determine the value of penicillin in preventing recurrences. The study is still incomplete.

What, then, can be done to take care of the rheumatic fever patient? The first step is an accurate diagnosis of the disease. Unfortunately, many other diseases can be confused with rheumatic fever: the list includes tuberculosis, anterior poliomyelitis, functional heart disease, influenza or

grippe, undulant fever, and inflammatory joint disease, such as rheumatoid arthritis. There is always the danger of diagnosing a rheumatic heart when there is only a murmur in an otherwise normal heart. A neurotic child can develop a cardiac neurosis which can be confused with the rheumatic condition. Expert diagnosis in both the acute and chronic stage of the disease is needed. It is necessary for the doctor to have the patient's complete medical history. In New York City public school children suspected of having rheumatic fever are referred to the Cardiac Classification Service of the New York Health Department, where a cardiologist examines them. One third leave with a diagnosis of possible heart disease, potential heart disease or both. Only repeated examinations over a period of time will determine the final verdict in many cases. If the children come from poor families where proper care cannot be given them, they may be sent to foster or convalescent homes for the necessary care.

The need for more of these convalescent homes is urgent: at present there are far too few. The rheumatic fever child must not only be carefully watched; he must also be taught how to take care of himself in order to prevent relapses. Irvington House is a fine example of what can be done. Founded in 1920 at Mineola, Long Island, it was originally a vacation cottage for cardiac children. Voluntary contributions have helped it grow, until today it is one of the out-

standing sanitariums of its kind in the country. Two years ago it affiliated with the New York University College of Medicine. Under the College's supervision, research is being carried on continuously to discover the cause, cure and treatment of the disease. Under the auspices of the New York Heart Association, a model sanitarium was built containing dormitories for 100 children, as well as classrooms, recreation and craft workshops, a dental clinic and laboratories.

IV

Every child admitted to Irvington House has to be recommended by a New York hospital or clinic. Soon after he arrives, a second medical examination, which includes blood tests, X-Rays, and an electrocardiogram, is given the patient, no matter what hospital he has come from. He is given periodical check-ups as often as they are considered necessary. The children stay at Irvington House from six months to four years; the average is around sixteen months. During this period a definite program is followed to reclaim the child as a whole, so that his personality will not be adversely affected by his illness. The program is designed to give the child security, a well-balanced life and the ability to care for himself. Upon admittance the children are classified according to the degree of their heart diseases. If they are potential or possible heart cases the treatment is different. The "potential" child is told, "You haven't got it; we'll tell you

how to help yourself so that you can avoid it"; and the "possible" heart child, "We hope you don't get it again. If you learn to put on the brakes now, eventually you can do the things you want to do."

Each child is taught to be honest about his disease, to know the symptoms and to report to the doctor if he has a nosebleed, a headache or joint pains. If necessary, he will go to bed, where he will be allowed to continue his studies if he is not suffering from an acute attack. Recreation directors will help him master new crafts or play games with him to pass the hours of confinement. The young patient learns to write his own rules. He knows that if he dances in the evening, he can dance only five minutes; then he must rest five minutes. He must not climb trees. If his heart is bad, he learns to run the elevator himself to avoid the stairs. He learns never to run.

The children respond quickly to their tranquil environment. The philosophy of the superintendent has a healthy effect on them. "We teach them hope," she explained. "A sick child is a frightened child. If the parents become hysterical, the child is affected. He may become over-excited or he may be rebellious. Sometimes he takes a devil-may-care attitude. That, too, is caused by fear. He feels insecure." With this in mind, she instills faith in them. No particular religion is taught, but each child knows the basis of every religion. Irish, Negro, Italian and Jewish

youngsters play happily together. God to them is very real. If one of them gets sick, the others pray for him.

Except for the few who must remain in the infirmary, these children attend school each morning in the downstairs classrooms. In the afternoon, they play games and work at crafts. They learn to dance and to appreciate music. Plays and operettas like *Hansel and Gretel* and *The Pirates of Penzance* are given frequently. They see movies twice a month, put out a newspaper and have their own scout group. The parents who come to visit them must also be re-educated, for every effort is made to fit the child back into home life when he is well enough to leave. If this is impossible, or if conditions at home make it seem unwise, the After-Care Committee of Irvington House finds another place where the child will be happy and able to develop normally. The children who can get through puberty without any recurrence of rheumatic fever have every chance of overcoming it.

The need for after-care committees to follow up hospitalized cases is now recognized everywhere. In the last ten years, the Irvington After-Care Committee has followed up more than 1600 children. Some of their information is obtained through personal correspondence, visits to homes or reports from the hospital which originally referred the patient to the sanitarium. Often it is obtained through the After-Care Clinic of the

New York University College of Medicine, where 35 to 50 patients are examined at each session. The doctors at the Clinic act as counselors to the rheumatic fever patients, giving advice on marriage, bearing children and the type of work for which they are best suited. These patients become office workers, accountants, taxi drivers, laborers, diamond appraisers, opticians, bartenders, furriers and doctors. Two of the girls have become nuns and one boy is studying to be a priest. One hundred of them have recovered so fully that they were accepted into the armed forces when war was declared.

V

Despite the obvious need for extensive rehabilitation programs to aid rheumatic fever victims, there are only a few convalescent homes like Irvington House. At Roslyn, Long Island, St. Francis Hospital is carrying out a program. In Syracuse, New York, Dr. Fred Hiss has developed a community program which takes the child through the acute stage in the hospital to the convalescent home and then to the after-care clinic. In 1937 Dr. Hiss had only twelve patients. Today, he has 150 children and six buildings in which to carry on his work. Minneapolis has a community project to help re-educate and care for the rheumatic fever child. At the House of the Good Samaritan in Boston, Dr. T. Duckett Jones has made a careful study of 1000 children over a period of ten years. Of this

picked group, 203 died, 14 were lost sight of for observation purposes and 783 lived. Of those who lived, 344 were forced to limit their activities: 135 were so incapacitated by residual heart disease that they had to lead sedentary lives; 209 could not participate in sports and led restricted lives. The remaining 439 were able to lead a normal existence.

Thousands of rheumatic fever victims become cripples because of inadequate care, and have to be supported by public taxation. Money spent earlier on their care could make them potential assets instead of liabilities. Yet so far there is no annual campaign for rheumatic fever, as there is for cancer, infantile paralysis and tuberculosis. The last infantile paralysis campaign netted \$16.6 million for 177,000 cases or \$94 for each case. But the voluntary health agencies collected only \$100,000 for 3.7 million heart cases—\$.03 a case. Although rheumatic fever kills many more than infantile paralysis, there is no money with which to start a national rheumatic fever campaign.

What is the government doing about it? Children with rheumatic fever or rheumatic heart disease are benefited from funds which the Children's Bureau in the Department of Labor distributes each year to the states. Each state is expected to raise a similar amount and work out a program to assist patients under twenty-one who are in the acute and chronic stages. These plans, approved in 1945 by eighteen states and con-

sidered by fifteen others, attempt to coordinate the efforts of doctors, public health nurses, welfare workers, social medical workers, agencies, parents and teachers. Educational and vocational guidance is provided for patients whose activities must necessarily be limited. The difficulty lies not in these programs, but in the fact that only a few thousand children can be reached. The funds, again, are insufficient. Only 240 of the 3000 counties in the United States have the money to maintain this program.

In 1943 a Conference on Rheumatic Fever was held in Washington, D. C., to exchange ideas on the administration of state programs. Out of this meeting grew the American Council on Rheumatic Fever. This organization, advised by a dozen leading experts, is affiliated with the American Heart Association. The Council will plan medical projects, and assist and initiate research on the disease. So far, donations for support of the Council have been small. But there is a growing interest in rheumatic fever treatment and donations large enough to promote research and education on the subject have been

made. The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary have contributed \$50,000, part of which will be used to pay the salary and expenses of a traveling secretary. This man, who is a physician, will contact medical and other groups throughout the country to stimulate interest in the disease. The Legion's money will also be used for research and for creating fellowships in designated medical centers.

In March 1947 the Life Insurance Medical Research Fund, supported by 148 life insurance companies in the United States and Canada, contributed \$500,000 to be distributed to colleges, hospitals and individual workers in both countries for research in heart diseases. Of this amount, \$90,247.50 will go to institutions to help finance research on rheumatic heart disease.

Today the American Council on Rheumatic Fever can hold out great hope for the future of rheumatic fever victims. But the public must become increasingly aware of the thousands of children who are still growing up with their hearts and their personalities crippled.

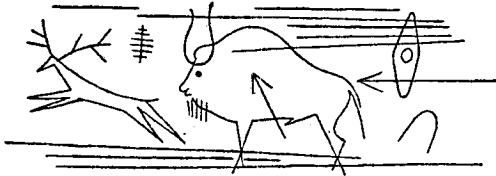
PORTRAIT OF A PIOUS LADY

BY MARION DOYLE

Frustration edged her supple tongue
with malice and pretension,
the while she hid her thoughts beneath
the pale cloak of Convention.

DOWN TO EARTH

by ALAN DEVOE



ANIMAL FAITH

THE most famous cautionary tale for would-be philosophers is perhaps the very old story about the centipede. This centipede, it will be recalled, had spent a happy lifetime pursuing the various activities of centipedehood, scurrying proficiently on its hundred legs wherever its inclinations might lead it. It was a contented centipede, active and effective. Then one day the centipede was halted on its rounds by a questioner. The questioner said: "Centipede, I am fascinated and astonished to observe how you walk around so proficiently while maneuvering no less than fifty pairs of legs. I should think it would be extremely difficult. Tell me, when you start to walk, which leg do you move first?"

Never in the entire life of the centipede — so active, so effective, so full of easy assurance — had this question ever occurred to its mind. It bent its intellect upon the question. Which leg — come to think of it — *did* one move first?

The centipede thought and thought. Leg number eight? Leg number fourteen? The centipede worked itself into an agony of analysis and indecision. And, so the story goes, the centipede was never never able to walk another step. Completely paralyzed by its insoluble intellectual problem, it remained immobile where it had been halted and slowly starved to death.

A-kin to this distressing tale is the only slightly less celebrated one known as the story of Buridan's ass. It is supposed to have been invented by the enemies of that philosopher to ridicule his views about the operation of the will. The anecdote has it, at any rate, that a hungry ass was once placed, free of restraint, between two identically tempting bundles of hay which were exactly equidistant from it to the right and to the left. The miserable animal, since the attraction of the right hand bundle was exactly counterbalanced by the attraction of the left hand bundle, could (obviously) only remain motionless between the two, imprisoned in irresolu-

tion, until like the hapless centipede in the other story it died of starvation.

These ridiculous yarns have survived for a good many centuries, and they will undoubtedly continue to do so indefinitely. For they do illustrate, with a pleasant absurdity, the perils of a too-devoted intellection.

It is the intellect that has given our human kind all its many and peculiarly human distinctions. It is only because we possess intellectuality that we are able to build much more remarkable suspension-bridges than spiders can, and are able to compose music, design systems of politics and economics, and construct complicated theories of metaphysics. Indeed, it is only by virtue of our intellectual faculty that we are able to look forward into the future, and to summon and scrutinize the past, and thus to escape from that time-world in which all the other parts of nature are held forever as captives of the immediate. The intellect is a most precious and estimable tool, deserving all our championing and most assiduous training.

But it is in the very nature of this instrument — this faculty which permits its user to know himself as a self, and to look upon the whole scene of self and otherness with the kind of questioning called rationality — that it can become a danger. It can, that is to say, come to be so over-regarded by its user that he invests it with a sort of total authority which it does not in fact possess. Entranced by the efficiency and agility of his own power of

thought, a man can fall into the false pride of supposing that all truth whatsoever, to be accepted as legitimate and to be acted upon, must be intellectually established. This pride of intellect has of course been the immemorial disease of philosophers, and in less drastic forms it comes along to befuddle all of us now and then.

There results the spectacle of a philosopher writing eight or nine volumes of exquisitely complicated reasoning in an effort to prove, to the satisfaction of his intellect, that he exists. There result libraries-full of intellectual dissertations which seek to establish that the objective world is indeed really there, and that we really have a certain power of choice in the performance of our own acts, and that it is "better" in some logically and intellectually provable way to be alive than to be dead. Not very rarely, there results an unhappy man whose furious intellection has brought him to the impasse and paralysis of a total inability to believe *anything*. Unable, by thought, to establish any of those necessary first principles without which no edifice of belief can be built, he can only remain as tragically motionless as the introspective centipede and as the starving ass which had no logically defensible reason for choosing one bale of hay rather than the other one.

II

It is a salutary reflection that the overwhelmingly major part of the world of nature goes forward with no

intellection at all. Foxes breed and find their food and manifestly have fun in the meadow, though it can never have occurred to any fox to try to prove, in a set of vulpine syllogisms, that he really exists and really has fur on his haunches. No bird can ever have made an intellectual inquiry into whether, logically, it is desirable to utter a song at the rising of the sun. The sun is seen and felt, and a song wells up. No coon lies dozing delightedly in a tree-fork in the summer noon because he has established an unassailable demonstration that this is good. He feels it; he knows it; he acts on it.

What all animals act upon is describable, exactly enough, as animal faith. What they know, in their unself-conscious way, they know with dumb certainty.

Ourselves an animal, we bring to the life-experience as our primary equipment precisely the same kind of dumb certainty, the same sort of immediacy of unformulated conviction. We "know" that the world is real in the instant when our sensorimotor experience tells us that it is. We know, in the first instant of the experience of the self, that this is as compelling an awareness of the real as is our experience of the rough bark of a hemlock tree or our experience of the sound of the song of a bird. We know that it is good to play a game, and that it is good to lie down weary to sleep, and that the taste of food is a good and that the feel of the rain is a good. We know all these things, and a

thousand others, before we know we know them. They are our "given"; they are what is lodged in us; as immediate a provision as what informs the spontaneous psyche of any owl or bat or fox or bird as its awareness opens to the adventure of being alive. We know these first things, so to speak, by direct apprehension of our total organism.

No platoon of furrow-browed philosophers can "prove" these primary knowings. They are animally basic; and it is not possible for the intellect to get, as it were, behind them. They are not rational things. They are not things that may be made problematical, or that may be debated. They are first things. They are the sureties of animal faith. Who does not accept them does not accept the gift of life as it is given.

It may be galling to our pride, to be sure, to accept what we cannot compel to pass our proud intellectual tests. If we cannot affix the seal of our intellectual endorsement, we may be inclined to reject the offering. If we are to maintain our mental health and balance, however, the severe fact is that we have no choice.

Spiritual teachers have been saying for a good many ages that the most valuable and necessary thing in the world is probably humility. In the matter of the right use of the intellect, it is surely true. If we over-exalt it, and think to give it a God-like competence and universal authority, we end by its turning upon itself and destroying the validity of its own

conclusions. If we acknowledge it to be only what in truth it is — a useful faculty, but forever incompetent to penetrate to the heart of the great underlying mysteries and analyze them into terms of human comprehensibility — we can create, on the foundation of an animal faith which with humility we acknowledge to be unprovable, sound structures of intellection that are our race's lasting glory.

It is the fundamental fact of our human situation that before we can make an act of will, before we can make an act of thought, we have to make an act of faith. To be wise, we have to be willing to be woodchuck-simple. We have to be willing not

only, in Thomas Huxley's phrase, to sit down before fact like a little child; we have to be willing to be as spontaneously believing as a red-furred fox, as animally trustful as all the other creatures of the world of nature are. Make this initial act of faith, and the intellect and will are set free to think and act. Withhold this first allegiance, withdraw our animal faith, and we are paralyzed forever in a snare of sophistries.

What is required of us is only this: that we humble ourselves to creatureliness with all the rest of the brotherhood of the earth. What is required of us is only this: that we take on faith, with trusting hands, the gift of life as it is given, and bow our heads a little.

ON LOOKING INTO THE GRAND CANYON

BY WILBERT SNOW

Great scenery has filled me to the brim
Since waves first leaped with me on cliffs of Maine,
But not until I reached Grand Canyon's rim
Did I know the awe that makes all language vain;
I wondered then what star above this spot
Wore on its breast a jewel half so fair,
And envied constellations, whose fixed lot
Would let them nightly gaze and worship there.

The ages of the world are in this gorge;
Illimitable mystery haunts its haze;
The hammer and the anvil that can forge
So many miracles of stones and clays,
Preëminently here have shaped and driven
Fit buttresses for naves and vaults of Heaven.

MURDER AT HARVARD

BY STEWART H. HOLBROOK

UNTIL the gray and melancholy twenty-third of November, in 1849, the people of Boston, like most Americans elsewhere, had been talking of nothing but the great rush to the gold fields of California. Young men, old men, even a number of women, had been flowing out of the six Yankee states ever since news of the glittering, 24-carat creek bottoms arrived in New England; and those who had so far resisted the lure did little else than wonder aloud if they too had best not join the stampede.

That is, until November twenty-third. On that day Boston at least had something nearer home to occupy its attention, an event of such magnitude that the gold fever subsided. Dr. George Parkman had disappeared, manifestly, completely, in broad daylight.

It was incredible. It was almost as if the tall granite monument, marking a notable battle in nearby Charlestown, had suddenly disappeared into the bowels of the earth. A Boston Parkman simply did not, could not, disappear and leave no trace. The Parkmans were not that sort of people.

The police went immediately to work, and so did hundreds, perhaps thousands of citizens, spurred by a

reward of \$3000 for the doctor alive, or \$1000 for his body.

It was simple to trace the eminent doctor's movements that day until about half-past one. He had left his Beacon Hill home about noon. He had gone to the Merchants bank on State Street. From there he had called at a green-grocers on Scollay Square to leave an order. A bit later he had been seen at the corner of Blossom and North Grove Streets, moving rapidly toward Harvard Medical College. At or near the college, it appeared, he had walked straight into Valhalla. Nor has he been seen since, though that was nigh a century ago.

II

Let us consider Dr. Parkman a moment. It was he, a Harvard man himself, who had given the very land on which the then new Medical College stood. Moreover, he had endowed the Parkman Chair of Anatomy, then occupied by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. The Parkmans had been prominent from what, even by Boston standards, were ancient times. His brother, the Rev. Francis Parkman, was a well-known divine whose son of the same name was on the verge of achieving fame as an historian. All of the Parkmans were

well-to-do, and the doctor's wealth was such that his son, who never earned a penny in his life, was to leave five million dollars for the care and improvement of Boston Common.

The usually staid Boston press threw all its genteel standards out the window and went into a dither. Police arrested scores of obscure persons. And then, though neither police nor public knew of it, an astonishing incident occurred. Professor John White Webster made a call on the Rev. Francis Parkman. The professor said that he had had what he termed an "interview" with the missing man in the Medical College on Friday afternoon, the day of the doctor's disappearance, at which time he had paid Doctor Parkman the sum of \$483. The latter had then, said the professor, left the college.

John White Webster was 56 years of age, a graduate of Harvard Medical. Since 1824 he had taught chemistry at Harvard, and since 1827 had held the Erving Chair of Chemistry and Mineralogy.

The Websters lived in Cambridge, had four pretty daughters, and were noted for the hospitality they lavished on faculty members and wives. Professor Webster's salary of \$1200 annually was wholly inadequate. He had a small income from lectures, but because he was notably dull on the platform this source of cash grew steadily smaller. Yet, and while it was known to Dr. Parkman's kin that Webster owed the doctor money and that the doctor had gone to the professor to

collect it, the professor was not under suspicion in regard to the mystery. Who *could* suspect a sound faculty member of the college on the Charles?

It began to look as though some thug had waylaid the doctor, done away with him, and made off with the \$483 which, so Professor Webster said, he had paid the eminent man. Nothing whatever came of the activity of the police. The Charles River was dragged in vain. The theory of robbery and murder still held the fancy of both public and police, and apparently nobody suspected Professor Webster except a morose and obscure man named Ephraim Littlefield, a janitor at Harvard Medical College.

Just what started Littlefield to brooding over a possible connection between Professor Webster and the disappearance of Doctor Parkman is not known. He was of a particularly suspicious nature, this janitor, a man of dark moods, the kind one thinks of as looking at everybody and everything not directly but out of the corner of his rather grim eyes. Anyway, it appears to have been a generous act of Professor Webster's that set Littlefield on his trail like a hound of hell.

On the Tuesday following Parkman's disappearance, Webster had presented Littlefield with a thumping big turkey, a Great Auk of a bird, fowl to feed a generation of Littlefields. It was an astounding event, too, since it was the first gift the janitor had received in seven years of work at the college.

Littlefield not only brooded over the gift of the turkey, but he was troubled because talk on the street had it that "they'll sure find Doctor Parkman's body somewhere in the Medical College." (In those days, medical colleges were held to be notorious receivers of the products of professional body-snatchers.) "I got tired," said Littlefield in explaining his next move, "of all that talk about the college."

Accordingly, the janitor procured a sufficient number of demolition tools to have supplied wreckers for all of Harvard University. Into his dismal basement home at the Medical College he lugged drills, hammers, chisels, crowbars. He told his startled wife that he was going to do nothing less than dig through the brick vault under Professor Webster's laboratory room in the college. Mrs. Littlefield was dreadfully frightened, saying that, should knowledge of her husband's suspicions reach officials of the college, he would be dismissed from his job. Suspicion of a Harvard professor was an act against nature, perhaps even against God.

Irritated at his wife's attitude, Janitor Littlefield told her a few things. Just before Parkman's disappearance, he said, the janitor was helping Webster putter around in his laboratory. The two men did not hear a footstep. But suddenly Doctor Parkman appeared before them, and he was already speaking, speaking quick, loud and harsh. "Doctor Webster," he cried, "are you ready for me tonight?"

Webster replied: "No, Doctor, I am not ready tonight." Parkman moved back toward the door, raised one arm and shook one fist. "Doctor Webster," he said savagely, "something must be accomplished tomorrow." Then he went out.

For the next several days Littlefield brooded and wondered whether, on the next call Doctor Parkman made on Professor Webster, the latter *had* been ready for him. "And *now*, Mrs. Littlefield," said the janitor to his wife, "what do you think?"

So, on what must have been a gloomy and foreboding Thanksgiving Day, while the astounding turkey simmered in the oven, Littlefield hammered and drilled his way into the solid brick wall of the vault beneath Webster's laboratory. Progress was fearfully slow, but Littlefield was as determined as he was suspicious. At noon he refreshed himself with the great bird and cranberries, then returned to his labors. He continued his work on Friday and that night broke through. "I held my light forward," he related, "and the first thing I saw was the pelvis of a man and two parts of a leg. I knew," he added darkly, "this was no place for such things."

With what must have been a sound of triumph in his clipped speech, Janitor Littlefield called the police, who took one look at the ghastly contents of the vault, then drove madly in a hack to Cambridge and called on Professor Webster. Constable Derastus Clapp, a man of odd and

devious Yankee ways, told the professor they would like him to attend them at the Medical College while a new search was being made. Webster replied that although the college had been searched half a dozen times, nevertheless he would be happy to accompany the officers. He got into the hack, which soon crossed the bridge into Boston — and continued on past North Grove Street and toward Leverett Street, where stood the hulking shape of Boston city jail.

"Stop," cried Webster, "we are going in the wrong direction."

But devious Constable Clapp was ready. "Oh, that's all right, professor," he said. "He is a new driver and somewhat green, but he will doubtless discover and correct his mistake." Boston had serene police officers in those days of Transcendentalism. . . .

Within a few moments Webster was in a cell of the jail. Reporters came, and next day the press and the town went delirious. "Horrible Suspicions!!", screamed the normally sedate *Transcript*, "Arrest of Professor J. W. Webster." Harvard College and Beacon Hill seemed about to tumble into the Charles River. The Gold Rush to California was forgotten. The *Transcript* shuddered in reporting the things Littlefield had found at the college and then, wholly losing control, it called on the Bard himself for words — *O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!*

Never again, so far as I am aware, did a Boston newspaper feel that a murder called for Shakespeare.

III

Professor John White Webster was put on trial on the nineteenth of March, 1850. He seemed quite short in stature to the "expert stenographer" who reported the occasion, and of no great strength. The state's star witness, Janitor Littlefield, took the stand and his accumulated testimony was bad indeed for the poor professor. The defense attempted to throw suspicion on Littlefield himself, and it also presented a long and distinguished array of character and other witnesses. The Hon. John Gorham Palfrey, former editor of the *North American Review*, declared sonorously that Professor Webster was a man of some temper but of extremely good heart. President Sparks of Harvard thought Webster "kind and humane." Nathaniel Bowditch, son of the celebrated mathematician, believed Webster to be "irritable though kind hearted."

Oliver Wendell Holmes, who gave his occupation as physician, testified both for the defense and the state. For the latter, he said that whoever had cut up the body alleged to be that of Doctor Parkman had certainly been handy with surgical knives.

The state was attempting to prove that the remnants of human mortality which had been discovered in the vault, in a tin box filled mostly with tanbark in Webster's laboratory, and in the laboratory stove, were those of Doctor Parkman; and the defense was doing its best to prove the frag-

ments to have been almost anybody but Doctor Parkman.

Day after day the trial continued and much of Boston sought to get seats in the courtroom. This being in no way possible, Police Marshal Tukey solved it, as best he could, by clearing the visitors gallery every ten minutes, thus permitting, according to the record, sixty thousand persons to witness portions of the event of the century. One of the afternoons must have been particularly grisly, the one when Dr. Woodbridge Strong took the stand to discuss the matter of destroying bodies by fire. "I have dissected a good many bodies in my day," said Dr. Strong with evident relish. "I recollect a pirate I had given me one time, and as I only wanted the bones, I dissected him rapidly, and. . . ." Some of the less avid spectators were seen to leave the gallery.

Slowly, over what must have been ten terrible days for Professor Webster, the coils of circumstantial evidence closed around him; and late on the eleventh day the jury was charged by Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw, another Harvard man (1800), in an address which is still considered by lawyers to be one of the great expositions of all time on the subject of circumstantial evidence. Three hours later the jury returned with a verdict of guilty.

The professor wasn't quite ready to greet the hangman, but his writ of error was denied, and he then addressed the Governor and Council, protesting his innocence. To no avail.

And long before Professor Webster's neck was broken, on August 30, 1850, he made a long confession. Janitor Littlefield — and how smug *that* man must have felt — Janitor Littlefield had been right. Professor Webster *was* ready for Doctor Parkman, when he called for his money on that fatal Friday. What had then happened, according to Webster's confession, was this:

Parkman had come that day with the idea of getting some money. When denied it, he called Webster a scoundrel and had shaken his fist in the professor's face. Then, said Webster, "I felt nothing but the sting of his words . . . and in my fury I seized whatever thing was handiest — it was a stick of wood — and dealt him an instantaneous blow with all the force that passion could give it." The one blow was enough. Parkman fell, bleeding at the mouth. Webster bolted the doors, stripped the dead man, hoisted him into the sink, and there and then dismembered him with the deft professional strokes that had been admired by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

IV

The painful celebrity that came to Harvard has been dissipated in the 98 years intervening, yet more than one member of the faculty long felt the blight cast by Professor Webster. Bliss Perry has related how his mother at Williamstown, Mass., refused to entertain a Harvard professor who had come there, circa 1870, as a delegate to a convention of New England

college officials. Mrs. Perry vowed most firmly on this occasion that she could not sleep "if one of those Harvard professors was in the house." In this instance the professor, who had to find quarters elsewhere, was James Russell Lowell.

Another incident concerns sardonic Ben Butler, to whom Harvard had somehow neglected to grant an LL.D. While cross-examining a witness in court, and treating him rather roughly, the judge intervened to remind Butler that the witness was no less than a Harvard professor. "Yes, I know, your honor," said Ben. "We hanged one the other day."

For the next half-century or more,

Harvard faculty members were constantly undergoing similar pleasantries, according to the late Albert Bushnell Hart, who told me that the ribbing was still prevalent in his early days at Harvard, in the eighties.

Although not all present-day sons of Harvard know that their university was the scene of one of the most celebrated crimes in the United States, Professor Webster's fame is secure. He remains the only Harvard professor to have performed lethally while a member of the faculty, and the sole college professor to gain entrance to the chaste pages of the *Dictionary of American Biography* on the strength of his stout right arm.

PHRASE ORIGINS—24

THE FOURTH ESTATE: *This phrase is a tribute to the power of the press. Newspapermen themselves often refer to their vocation as the Fourth Estate. The word "estate" is commonly applied to any group or order which participates in making the decisions of government. In most European governments before the rise of modern democracy three estates were generally recognized: in England they were the clergy, the nobility and the commons, later the Lords Spiritual, Lords Temporal and Commons respectively. Sometimes the phrase "Fourth Estate" was jocularly applied to the people as a whole, or to some leader like William Cobbett who was deemed to be especially influential. In 1837 Carlyle spoke of a Fourth Estate of able editors. Carlyle also attributed to Edmund Burke the observation that "there were three estates in Parliament but in the reporters' gallery yonder there sat a fourth estate more important far than they all." Bulwer-Lytton called the London Times "the fourth estate of the realm," and Macaulay also referred to the press gallery as the fourth estate. Today the expression refers only to the press.*

MORRIS ROSENBLUM

THE RECORD CABINET

by HOWARD L. GOODKIND

ORCHESTRAL COMPOSITIONS, by Alan Hovhaness. *Disc*, 876, 3 records, \$5.50. Unquestionably the most stimulating and interesting recording of the month is the first pressing of Alan Hovhaness' Piano Concerto "Lousadzak" and his evening song called "Tzaikerk." Collectors will find this album unusually rewarding not only for the fine quality of the performance, but because Hovhaness has produced what is probably the most original music in recent years. This young American of Armenian-Scottish descent flavors his music with genuine oriental atmosphere. It is very likely that most listeners will have heard nothing similar to it. It is completely sincere and the writing is fluid. The piano and orchestra in "Lousadzak" imitate ancient oriental string, wind and percussion instruments in one, long, winding movement, which twists its complicated way through many moods, each more fascinating than the last, and providing the hearer with new sensations at every turn. The really compelling quality of Hovhaness' music is its completely uninhibited style. It is difficult to believe that musicians are not improvising it as you listen. The evening song is a delicately modulated and captivating conversation between an excited flute and a dogmatic violin. The playing of flutist Philip Kaplan is skillful and well adapted to Hovhaness' strange technique of composing.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND, by Lewis Carroll, *Columbia*, MM 713, 4 records, \$5.85. This musical adaptation of Lewis Carroll's beloved children's classic is horrible. The danger of this particular album is that many adults will be attracted by the title and find out later to their sorrow that they have been duped into investing in an inane, insipid, thoroughly miscast, Hollywoodized, soap-opera version of Alice's adventures. Alice is played by a Hollywood starlet named Jane Powell, who is totally miscast. The "original" music by Carmen Dragon is hack composing of the worst type. If you want your child ever to enjoy Lewis Carroll's wonderful story, carefully avoid this album.

JOHNNY 'ROUND-THE-BLOCK, by Leo Israel and Sylvia Kramer. *Vox*, VSP 307, 3 ten-inch records, \$3.00; and **LULLABIES AND ROUNDS**. *Disc*, 601, 2 ten-inch records, \$2.25. These are two splendid children's albums. The Vox release is the delightful story of a little boy who wanders around his city neighborhood, wondering at the many interesting things he sees and hears. Each of his impressions — the milk wagon, the trolley, the organ grinder, the junk wagon — are represented by clever little songs designed to appeal to the average child between five and ten. This approach takes full advantage of all the sensations of childhood which become so commonplace to adults. The Disc album of very short but charming traditional songs for children is a good selection for junior folk-music fans.

CANTATA NO. 140 (SLEEPERS WAKE!), by Bach. *Victor*, DM 1162, 4 ten-inch records, \$4.00. This is another in the series of Bach cantatas which Robert Shaw and the RCA Victor Choral and Orchestra are recording for Victor. These are particularly interesting because it is so rare that we have the opportunity to hear Bach's short choral works. This cantata, while it does not represent Bach's most advanced composing, has many interesting and worthwhile passages. The solo parts are sung by Suzanne Friel, Roy Russell and Paul Matthen. The choral passages are not particularly effective, but this is perhaps more the fault of the composer than Mr. Shaw, who handles his group capably.

HIGH BUTTON SHOES. *Victor*, K 10, 4 ten-inch records, \$4.00. *High Button Shoes* does not fare as well on records as it does on the stage. The hilarious Keystone Cop ballet of Jerome Robbins cannot be reproduced on shellac and, unfortunately, that is the high point of the show. What is left is an annoyingly catchy nothing called *Papa, Won't You Dance with Me?* and a very commonplace love song called *I Still Get Jealous*. Oscar Hammerstein and Richard Rodgers will certainly never get jealous of these tunes.

SYMPHONY NO. 3 (THE EROICA), by Beethoven. *Victor*, DM 1161, 6 records, \$7.00. The Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Serge Koussevitsky has produced a technically excellent recording of the magnificent Eroica. It is interesting to compare the differences in interpretation between the recent Decca release by Victor de Sabata and this latest Boston album. Dr. Koussevitsky begins the symphony with considerably more fire and spirit than director de Sabata, but the latter has the advantage of being able to build up more subtly and slowly to the over-all climax in the last movement. The Boston recording takes this final movement so slowly and deliberately that it loses a great deal of the power that one associates with it. These are, of course, merely matters of personal preference. I have heard Koussevitsky's interpretation of this symphony termed the finest of this generation. The Eroica has also been released on vinylite, but I have not heard the plastic edition.

SYMPHONY No. 5, by Gustav Mahler. *Columbia*, MM 718, 8 records, \$10.85. This is the first recording of Mahler's long-winded fifth symphony and, naturally, Bruno Walter conducts. No other conductor could be considered for this path-breaking occasion, since Dr. Walter has for years been the world's leading champion of Mahler's music. There are two schools of thought on the romantic Bohemian's work. Some consider him a musical giant on a par with the three Bs. Others classify him as an overrated, pompous pigmy with very little to say but a million ways of saying it. I find myself somewhere between the two extremes. While Mahler certainly took the longest and most circuitous route to express his musical ideas, he has produced many rhapsodic passages that are well worth waiting for. Only the music lover with patience will enjoy this album. The N. Y. Philharmonic does a faithful job of reproducing Mahler's colorful and power-driving score. On the copy I heard, several of the records had serious mechanical defects which prevented the needle from tracking properly. This might have been caused by careless pressing, and other sets are probably perfect. The imperfections will only show up on record-changing sets, not on single players. Col-

lectors who purchase their records at stores which do not provide such machines for testing are taking a chance on getting not only damaged records but frequently warped ones as well. The latter are difficult to spot unless they are played on top of another shellac disc.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE (LOVE DUET), by Wagner. *Columbia*, MX 286, 2 records, \$3.35. Helen Traubel, Torsten Ralf, and Herta Glaz have recorded this famous passage from the second act of Wagner's opera at the Metropolitan Opera House. This is the second album which Columbia has released under its new contract with the Metropolitan. *Hansel and Gretel* started the series inauspiciously, but this album is a more encouraging sample of what we may expect in the future. Each of the three stars is in excellent voice and the passages featuring Miss Traubel and Mr. Ralf are exemplary of opera at its finest.

PIANO CONCERTO No. 1, by Tchaikovsky. *Victor*, DM 1159, 4 records, \$5.00. This forceful piano concerto has been recorded by Artur Schnabel and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra with Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting. Schnabel has accorded the work his usual power and insight. He shines particularly in the tender, slow movement where he displays his versatility in varying tone and dynamics to produce effects on the piano which add depth to the work he is interpreting. An outstanding album.

CLASSICAL SYMPHONY, by Prokofiev. *Columbia*, MX 287, 2 records, \$3.35. This is a good recording of the delightful little Prokofiev symphony played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Eugene Ormandy. It is no better, however, than the already established Victor album of the same work (DM 942) or the older Columbia album by Dimitri Mitropoulos. If you want to buy a performance of this work, any of the three that is available is safe.

EINE KLEINE NACHTMUSIK, by Mozart. *Columbia*, DM 1163, 2 records, \$3.35. The most interesting thing about this latest recording by Sir Thomas Beecham and the London Philhar-

monic is the last movement. Mozart wrote this movement in 2/2 allegro tempo, but usage has won over most conductors to something midway between allegro and presto. It is the latter tempo which is most familiar to listeners. Sir Thomas, however, is a stickler for tradition and he believes that Mozart's way is the *only* way. After hearing this album, I feel that the faster version is superior to the authentic one, because it transforms a commonplace, rather draggy and repetitive movement into a sprightly, energetic gem. And, after all, Mozart was only human.

HEIFETZ ENCORES. *Victor*, M 1158; 4 ten-inch records, \$4.00; and REPEAT PERFORMANCE (LILY PONS), *Columbia*, MM 720, 4 records, \$5.85. These two albums should be compared together. In both recordings, superior artists offer short instrumental and vocal selections that they use frequently as concert encores. It is the choice of music which is bothering. Heifetz plays several extremely interesting and seldom-heard compositions including two Bach gavottes, a pantomime by de Falla and works by Debussy, Beethoven and Milhaud. They are not only executed with great skill but they are in themselves novel musical experiences — the perfect combination for an album of this type. The Lily Pons album features songs that are somewhat less than interesting. Miss Pons' voice is as clear and bell-like as usual on these records, but there is a limit to the number of times an admirer can enjoy her renditions of the *Blue Danube*, *The Last Rose of Summer*, *Les Filles de Cadiz* and *Ay, Ay, Ay*.

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 4, by Bach. *Vox*, 621, 2 records on vinylite, \$5.00. Otto Klemperer and the Pro Musica Orchestra offer an intimate and pleasant performance of this Bach work as the first in a new series that will comprise the complete Brandenburg Concertos on vinylite. The only criticism that can be levelled at this album is that it lacks balance. There are several passages where instruments drown out one another and throw the listener out of auditory focus. These do not by any means ruin the album, however, and it is good to have these masterpieces on unbreakable, surface-free plastic.

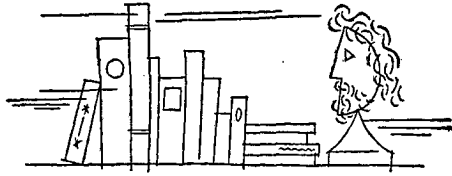
FANTASIEN, by Brahms. *Vox*, 178, 4 ten-inch records, \$3.75. This is a really excellent recording of the seven Brahms Fantasiens for piano, played by the talented young American, Leonard Shure. He has done a brilliant job of interpretation of these introspective compositions. They make pleasurable listening and they will be a worthwhile addition to record libraries.

SINGLES. Charles Trenet, the French crooner, steals the compliments from Pinza and Stevens this month. He does not have much of a voice, but his singing is so charming and delicate that he can evoke admiration from even confirmed jazz-haters. On his latest ten-inch record he sings *Retour des Saisons* and *Tombe du Ciel* (Columbia 4502-M). The recording of two duets by Rise Stevens and Ezio Pinza is fair (Columbia 72371-D), but Miss Stevens excels in her singing of *Through the Years* and *Bless this House* (Columbia 4501-M). Another excellent operatic recording has been made by the soprano Licia Albanese. Her high register is magnificently clear and rich in the little-heard solo *L'Altra Notte in Fondo Al Mare* from Boito's *Mefistofele* (Victor 11-9848).

THE COLUMBIA BOOK OF MUSICAL MASTERPIECES, edited by Goddard Lieberson. \$5.00. *Allen, Towne & Heath*. This new musical encyclopedia, edited by Columbia's director of classical recordings, is actually a collection of program notes that were written for the fly-leaves of album covers. It is a fairly complete guide to music of every type and a valuable aid to record collectors who would like to have their notes in a single handy volume. The works are listed by composer alphabetically and the notes include anecdotes, criticism, vital statistics and scoring. Mr. Lieberson explains in his preface that he has made no attempt to include every composer who has ever written music. It would be hair-splitting, therefore, to complain about the omission of such figures as Monteverdi, Boyce, Leclair, Lully and others.

NOTE: In my review of three Rasumovsky quartets last month, I stated erroneously that the Budapest String Quartet records exclusively for Victor. Actually, this quartet records exclusively for Columbia.

THE LIBRARY



THE LITERARY TONE OF THE TWENTIES

by BEN RAY REDMAN

IN THE year 1920 Henry L. Mencken surveyed the American literary scene and reported, in *Prejudices: Second Series*, that he found it bad. Indeed, so bad as to be almost beyond belief and past bewailing.

The writers of our republic were superficial, incapable of facing fundamentals, irresolute, fearful of ideas and amorous of platitudes, faltering, feeble, devoid of gusto, bloodless in their respectability, strangers to "brave and noble earnestness," and possessed of "no generalized passion for intellectual and spiritual adventure." Such creatures were, of course, abominations in the sight of a critic who longed for a literature that would concern itself with the "poignant and significant conflict between a salient individual and the harsh and meaningless fiat of destiny, the unintelligible mandates and vagaries of God." But what could be expected of a nation that had no civilized aristocracy? Of a people who had begun as second-rate

Anglo-Saxon stock, and degenerated rapidly thereafter.

Dividing his specimens into three layers — an upper crust of decaying Brahmins, a bottom layer of Greenwich Villagers, and a fat middle section of popular authors who were reaping golden rewards from the magazines and just beginning to be corrupted by the platinum and diamonds of Hollywood — Mencken placed his bets on the Village. It had yet to produce a first-rate book or even an arresting short story, but it was a scene of promising literary ferment, and it could already claim playwrights worthy of attention. Then, too, there was hope in "the groping questions of Dreiser, Cabell and Anderson." As for the middle section, inhabited by such figures as Rex Beach and Robert W. Chambers, the critic wasted his time when he hurled his heavy thunderbolts against it; just as a critic would waste his time today by castigating seriously the authors of *Forever Amber* and its numerous kin. But it all made lively reading, and liveliness was Mencken's stock in trade. If the United States was largely a literary desert, then he

would amuse himself and his customers by enthusiastically damning every single, sterile grain of sand.

Years passed, only four years, and Mencken looked out from his watchtower over an altered landscape. Post-war darkness had descended upon the nations across the Atlantic, but here, where the huntsmen were up in America, there was a rising wind of literary endeavor and accomplishment. There was even a chance that leadership in the arts, especially the art of literature, might eventually "transfer itself from the eastern shore of the Atlantic to the western shore." There was a maturing generation of youngsters, neither timorous nor imitative, who were "making a first-hand examination of the national scene" and attempting to represent it in literary terms that were wholly American. Old taboos were dead. The imaginative writer in this country was now quite as free as he deserved to be. Some might not be making the best possible use of that freedom; and Hollywood was a grossly expanding threat. But the air was full of hope. The desert was beginning to flower. Something had happened, something was happening, and something was going to happen in American literature. The critic bent to his drums.

The scene surveyed by H. L. Mencken is now the property of social and literary historians, among them Maxwell Geismar, who is engaged in studying the American novel from a point of view grounded chiefly

on social interests. Some five years ago Mr. Geismar published *Writers in Crisis*, in which he considered the work of Lardner, Dos Passos, Hemingway, Wolfe, Faulkner and Steinbeck. Now, moving backward in time, he gives us *The Last of the Provincials* [\$3.50, Houghton, Mifflin], sub-titled "The American Novel, 1915-1925," and it is with this book that we are here concerned.

II

At the outset we must note the treacherous nature of titles, categories and chronological divisions. *The Last of the Provincials* is a study of the American novel, yet in it we find Mencken oddly heading a procession that is completed by Sinclair Lewis, Willa Cather, Sherwood Anderson and Scott Fitzgerald. Mencken's inclusion is explained, not quite satisfactorily, by the statement that he is present "as a dominant literary voice of the American twenties." Mr. Geismar's book is called a study of the American novel between 1915 and 1925, but in following his subjects' careers the critical historian finds himself considering work that belongs to the thirties and forties of our century. He justifies this reasonably enough, although the explanation stultifies the sub-title, by the argument that "writers don't quite live or die according to their historical epoch." One notes that Scott Fitzgerald is studied in the company of Willa Cather and Sherwood Anderson, rather than in the more congenial,

contemporary company of Dos Passos and Hemingway; and one guesses that this is because Fitzgerald was omitted from Mr. Geismar's first book and so had to be fitted into his second. Then, too, there is the title-word "Provincials." Is this noun aptly chosen for its descriptive duty? If an author is to be called a provincial, it must surely be because of his mental orientation and published work, not because of his place of origin. Sherwood Anderson was a provincial, and the label may be applied with at least partial fairness to Lewis. But it is not an apt tag for Mencken, nor for Willa Cather, although she grew up in Nebraska, nor for Scott Fitzgerald, although he was born in Minnesota. However much the last may have felt that he was an outsider looking in on the world of the rich, he was not a provincial outsider; for he was provincial in neither his habits of mind, his illusions, his ideals, his desires nor his writing. That he was an adolescent, almost all his days, is another matter.

Before coming to the novelists who are the proper subjects of the book in front of us, let us consider the critic who has been given so conspicuous a place among the writers of fiction. Mr. Geismar's study of Mencken has its virtues, as have all his studies. He traces the rise and shifts and reversals of Mencken's ideas and social attitudes; he illustrates his tale with apposite quotations from Mencken's many volumes, thereby recalling a body of entertainment that was much enjoyed by all of us who were old

enough to enjoy it in the days of its original production. He neatly defines Mencken's split relationship to the land of his birth, allegiances and detestations. But he is less successful, or not at all successful, in convincing us that the Baltimorean belongs at the party to which he has been invited. It is not enough to say that Mencken was a dominant literary voice and "set the tone for his generation." Evidence of this should be forthcoming, and it is not.

Indeed, it is not available. It is not demonstrable that Mencken exerted any appreciable influence on the novelists under consideration in *The Last of the Provincials*, or on their immediate successors.

The truth is that Henry L. Mencken was an eloquent, usually shrewd, always stimulating, considerably influential critic of society, who included literature, along with cookery and medicine and congressmen, in his purview; a critic of enormous vitality, confident intelligence, and shifting values; a master of exaggeration and invective; a virtuoso on journalistic drums, cymbals, and derisive whistles of varying pitch — but not an innovator, not an inspiring force in the field of literature that Mr. Geismar has chosen as his province. Mencken's characteristic place was on the sidelines, where his performance was so exuberant and diverting that he often seemed to steal the show from more central figures.

Mr. Geismar views his novelists against a period background: the

period which witnessed "the final conquest of the American town, and the values of an older rural life, by the New Economic Order of the industrialized cities." He views them either as creatures reacting to socioeconomic pressures or as human beings seeking personal adjustment and stability in the face of hostile social forces. He is deeply concerned with the "underlying cultural patterns" of both his authors and their characters. He makes much of the passing of free enterprise in America, and the rise of finance capitalism; the words "corporation" and "cartel" come from his pen at every possible opportunity, and sometimes with little reason. The reader must often remind himself, since the critic seldom does it for him, that the novel is an art form.

III

Of literary criticism, in the strict sense of the word, there is little. Mr. Geismar deals with his authors' social attitudes, with the raw materials that they have found in society, and with the temperaments which they have brought to their tasks, rather than with their finished product: literature. He pays no attention to style, save for one or two passing comments, and, apart from character delineation, he has no eye for any of the factors which contribute to the creation of what we call literary art.

This approach, however, yields a substantial body of interesting information and results in a number of valuable insights, the total of the re-

wards varying with the authors discussed, and with Mr. Geismar's responses to them. Speaking broadly, he regards Sinclair Lewis and his world with distaste, admires Willa Cather with reservations, feels a profound sympathy for Anderson, and is charmed but not deceived by the already legendary figure of Fitzgerald. He is a discriminating critic who refuses to accept or reject his authors whole, who knows that virtues and faults may be almost inextricably mingled in a writer's work. He is also a quiet critic. He makes his points with a minimum of bluster and self-assertiveness, and is given to qualifying, even sometimes contradicting, his own conclusions.

Like other critics before him, Mr. Geismar finds that Lewis, whose literary cosmos is the American Middle-Class Empire, is curiously identified with the people of whom he writes with a novelist's apparent superiority: their values are his values, at bottom, and his true home is Zenith. The typical figures of Lewis' novels, according to Mr. Geismar, lack "inner security," "outward grace," "integrity and manners"; while the novels as a whole exhibit no view of life "which could sustain a novelist's belief in life, or even in his own work." Lewis has proved himself incapable of understanding the industrial civilization which he has so graphically portrayed; he does not, for example, comprehend the implications of *It Can't Happen Here*; and he is a wanderer "between a barren

and deteriorating hinterland and an increasingly appalling industrial order — a hinterland with which he feels no ties, an industrial order with which he cannot come to grips." Inferior as a realist when compared with Dreiser and Dos Passos, inadequately possessed of values when compared with Cather and Anderson, he still has produced work that has a "curious sort of solidity." And yet, adds Mr. Geismar, one might say "that the whole import of Lewis' work shows that he has learned nothing, answered nothing, solved nothing."

All this is well enough in its way, although in my opinion Mr. Geismar's summing-up does far less than justice to Lewis as an artist in fiction. More valuable, I think, is the really illuminating exposition of the different levels of reality on which Lewis' novels exist. This author is widely known as a realist, but his latest critic sees him as a writer who has alternated between the real world and a world of the imagination; as one whose sense of reality is limited, when compared with the variety, flexibility, and irresponsibility of his fantasy. According to this view, *Main Street* is "middle realism"; *Babbitt* is "an imaginative world of a high order . . . our native *Inferno* of the mechanized hinterland"; while *Dodsworth* exhibits Lewis' realism at its best. Sam Dodsworth is "the Babbitt, as it were, of reality." In *Arrowsmith*, too, we are dealing with realistic elements; but "*It Can't Happen Here* is a fantasy that leads only into the realms of

whimsy." And so on, alternatively, through the fairly long list of Lewis' novels. This is a critical contribution that stands up under scrutiny, and one that a reader may profitably use.

IV

Mr. Geismar approaches Willa Cather with deferential esteem, as a novelist "less restricted than Edith Wharton, more intense than Ellen Glasgow," and possessed of a complex, difficult, and even contradictory mind. He believes that her sense of life is "deeper and tougher" than that of Mencken or Lewis, and of a kind quite unknown to Fitzgerald's generation; yet he also asserts that she was "completely estranged from the life of her own time." With Sherwood Anderson she shares a kind of "old fashioned 'optimism,'" which realizes that human pain and pleasure are indissoluble, and which is capable of accepting them together. And yet, and yet, she turns away from distasteful society and instinctively avoids certain areas of human experience. Indeed, Mr. Geismar sees in her total work "the story of an evasion of a social environment, of a broken creative framework, and a dissipation of the writer's true energies — a very familiar story in the national letters." He also sees in her career a spiritual pilgrimage; but, as all his novelists appear to him to be pilgrims of one kind or another, I shall discuss these pilgrimages together. Or, rather, I shall reserve the discussion of three of them. That of Sherwood Anderson is so central, in the

chapter devoted to him, that consideration of it cannot be postponed.

Anderson's life as a writer is described by Mr. Geismar as a long, circling, labyrinthine journey in search of understanding. His rooted love of the American town did not suffice; he had to know what his own life meant, what it meant to live in the United States during a period of radical economic transformation; he had to probe the inarticulate misunderstandings that shut off man from man. Mr. Geismar might have said that Anderson was very much like the boy in one of his most famous stories. He wished to know why: why there should be so great a discrepancy between what is and what might be; why men should choose to live with ugliness when they are aware of beauty, and it is at hand for the seeker. He never learned the answers, although his life in Virginia was the climax of his long search, but "he was saved, at least, from the folly of those who know the answers."

Mr. Geismar sees in Anderson's circling course, not merely a persisting state of confusion, but a development that other critics have failed to see; and on one page he estimates that this author came to maturity some ten years after *Winesburg* (1919), while on another he describes "Death in the Woods" (1933) as Anderson's first completely mature work. Like his heroes, who turned from the pursuit of personal power to the quest of brotherhood, this short story writer and novelist emerged from his "early origins of isolation and bitterness

... as perhaps the most balanced, communal, and sympathetic writer of two decades." It should be noted that Mr. Geismar has a sometimes unfortunate habit of identifying author and character, creator and created; but it should also be noted that such identification is more than usually justifiable in the case of Anderson.

Readers who would check for themselves Mr. Geismar's conclusions regarding this author will find more than eight hundred pages of relevant and well-selected text in *The Sherwood Anderson Reader* [\$5, Houghton, Mifflin], lovingly edited, with an introduction, by the late Paul Rosenfeld. This volume, which contains a certain amount of previously uncollected material, holds the stories by which Anderson will live. They are the work of a writer whom Rosenfeld found Zolaesque, whose "first lights in fiction" were Bennett and Dreiser — Dreiser, whose own career petered out, after laborious achievement, in *The Stoic* [\$3, Doubleday], just published, to nobody's satisfaction. But when I read the best of Anderson's tales, it is of Chekhov that I think. Both men had what Avrahm Yarmolinsky has called "a talent for humanity." Both knew life's ugliness, and could face it with compassion. And the Anderson of the best stories had Chekhov's uncanny gift of taking the reader immediately into his confidence, into his intimacy, with an opening sentence. The two were also brothers in colloquial ease. But it is time to take leave of Anderson and

the "Middle Generation." A new generation is knocking at the door, and in steps the incomparable Scott.

v

Fitzgerald is already a legend. The golden days of Scott and Zelda are cherished in memory by many of their aging contemporaries who never even knew the glamorous pair, and the rising generation listens to tales of the Jazz Age with the same sort of interest that might be aroused in them by stories of the Golden Horde. It may be that Fitzgerald's work, if it endures for any length of time, will do so by virtue of the personal legend. Having recently re-read the bulk of his writings, and just read what Mr. Geismar has to say of them, I am inclined to believe that this may prove so.

With the best will in the world, Fitzgerald's latest critic cannot make Fitzgerald's books add up to any considerable sum, despite their author's indisputably brilliant gifts. He can tell us that *The Beautiful and the Damned* "is by all odds a better work" than *This Side of Paradise*, but this only reminds us that the latter, first in time, is a very bad novel indeed; almost unreadable now, were it not for the legend. He can be as kind as possible towards *Tender Is the Night*, but he must admit that certain of its excellent parts are much superior to its far from excellent whole. Of course, there is *The Great Gatsby*. There is always *The Great Gatsby*. But is it enough? After telling us that "the

novel seems superbly done," and that the spell of its writing "is quite stunning," Mr. Geismar goes on to ask: But why could it not "have been just a little bit better?" I would echo the question. But it is not a little bit better, even though it is the best of the boiling; and because of this I believe that Fitzgerald will finally be adjudged to have been most successful in a few of his short stories.

Mr. Geismar stresses the theme of the "outsider," which is so pervasive in Fitzgerald's work, and which was clearly recognized by the author himself. The lovers of the Jazz Age, according to St. Scott, are seen for what they are: young women of dubious sexuality, and "graceful, indolent, clinging young men." The critic notes the recurring mother-son relationship in Fitzgerald's fiction, but he does not investigate it publicly. He touches only reticently on the personal experiences which lay behind *Tender Is the Night*, contenting himself with saying that "the fifteen years between *The Great Gatsby* and Fitzgerald's last novel are years of continuous doubt, of ebbing vitality, of spiritual trauma." But he is eloquent in his account of the pilgrimage which carried his author from Minnesota to New York, to Europe, and then — "almost as if he were drawn to the furthest reaches of the American West" in his search for "salvation" — to Hollywood. And this brings us to a consideration of the pilgrimage pattern of which Mr. Geismar is so fond.

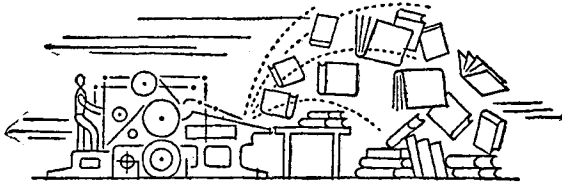
In the case of Anderson, I think, the pattern actually existed in the man's life and writing; but in the other cases I believe it to be an imaginative creation of the critic. Fitzgerald went to Hollywood for the usual reason, and no other: money. The East-West shuttling of Lewis, which Mr. Geismar finds so significant, was nothing more than the activity of a professional writer who was making the most profitable use of his available material, of the two social *milieux* most familiar to him. As for Willa Cather's "voyage of spiritual *malaise*," which, according to Mr. Geismar, led her to seek "spiritual sanctuary" in the desert, and to find it among the Ursuline Sisters of Quebec, a less imaginative critic would see in it nothing more than the familiar journeying of a novelist in search of subjects. A professional story-teller must look round him for his stories; he feels the need of fresh scenes, new faces. And the artist who had done one kind of thing well often feels the necessity of trying his hand at something quite different. When Willa Cather traveled to New Mexico and Canada, she was not "rejecting" her native scene with "a kind of infantile malice," and when she came back to the Middle West, in *Obscure Destinies*, it was not an "odd return." Having refreshed herself by working new ground, she returned with re-invigorated interest to an old scene. Mr. Geismar may argue, of course, that an author's choice of material is directed by inner compulsions, but,

with professional writers, these compulsions seldom result in patterns that may be neatly equated with spiritual pilgrimages. Had Willa Cather actually found the "sanctuary" of which her critical historian speaks, she would not have come back to the Middle West, and later looked to the South of *Sapphira and the Slave Girl*.

In a final chapter Mr. Geismar gives his readers a sketchy picture of the literary scene which was so active in the 1920s, and he sums up these years, along with those of the Middle Generation, as "The Years of Loss." This summation results, I think, from a confusion of economic with literary values, a confusion of literature with the society that is its material. Disillusion and despair are often the springs of vital literature, and the very fact that "the voices of communal aspiration have become those of solitary bitterness, of evasion and fantasy, of a desperate hedonism," may spur writers to a higher level of literary accomplishment than they would have reached in happier circumstances.

But however much one may disagree with some of Mr. Geismar's general conclusions, or quarrel with his particular readings (how can he say that Nichole Diver became an "amoral wanton," for example?), or wish that he possessed a steadier, less chameleon-like, less frequently awkward style, he is still a stimulating critical companion, with whom one may profitably study the authors of his choice.

THE CHECK LIST



(Continued from page 133)

which is at times a statistical abstract, at times a source book of obscure quotations and at times a ponderous mass of clichés. Mr. Huberman flits back and forth between the recondite and the obvious: it is interesting, for example, to read his intimate descriptions of factory life in New England in the early 1800s, but it is almost painful to follow the long-winded explanation, familiar to any eighth-grader, of the influence of cotton planting in strengthening slavery. The book is a re-issue, brought up to date, of a volume first published in 1932.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, edited by James P. Wood. \$5.00. *Funk & Wagnalls*. Mr. Wood reprints, *in toto* or in excerpts, representative works published in 1847, so as to give the contemporary reader some notion of what was being read a hundred years ago, when the nation was in the throes of the War with Mexico — a war, incidentally, which sharply divided the country as to its justness. Mr. Wood selects from the writings of Prescott, Emerson, William Ellery Channing, Melville, Rufus Wilmot Griswold, J. Fenimore Cooper and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, to mention only some of his choices. He prefaces each selection with a valuable brief historical-critical introduction, and he also contributes a general introduction, which reveals him as a man of taste and learning. This volume is the first in the projected Centenary Series in American Literature, and it augurs very well indeed for the future volumes.

LUCKY FORWARD, *The History of Patton's Third U. S. Army*, by Robert S. Allen. \$5.00.

Vanguard. Col. Allen, who is better known as co-

creator with Drew Pearson of the "Washington Merry-Go-Round," has come up with a crackling, swiftly paced account of the part played in the European war by Patton's Third Army, maneuvering with agility through 400 pages of massed facts and statistics. Unfortunately, the book suffers from its frequent tone of awe-struck hero-worship. The author seems to dismiss most of the other commanders as little better than amateurs; and the reader comes away with the impression that Allied Supreme Headquarters devoted most of its time to devising means for preventing Patton and his troops from winning the war by themselves. The many admirers of Patton's ready command of obscenity will be pleased to learn that Col. Allen has been careful to preserve some of it in this book.

THE OTHER KINGDOM, by David Rousset. \$2.75. *Reynal & Hitchcock*. This short volume dealing with the social structure of the German concentration camps is one of the most interesting books on the subject that has appeared. The author spent sixteen months in Buchenwald and other camps. He makes it abundantly clear that the chief purpose of the camps was the absolute degradation of its inmates; before they could die they had to be broken by the most sadistic penal system in history. (The supply of free labor afforded by the camps was only a secondary consideration for the Nazis.) There was a substantial amount of prisoner self-government, and a great deal of Mr. Rousset's material deals with the struggles for power among the inmates. Toward the end of the war, he reports, the "politicals," led by the Communists, took over the administration of the camps from the criminal prisoners. Mr. Rousset's failure to report the well-estab-

lished facts concerning Communist atrocities against the Social Democrats in Buchenwald, after the former had come to power in the prisoner government, raises some doubts concerning his political honesty.

BIOGRAPHY

THE MARSHALL FIELDS, by John Tebbel. \$3.75. *Dutton*. The Marshall Fields have done much to shape American industry, finance and publishing. The first of the line specialized in amassing a fortune, the second came to a tragic end, and the third is still very much a figure in current political, economic and publishing affairs. Mr. Tebbel, who makes no secret of his general liberal views, is nevertheless objective in his study of the three Fields, and offers criticism and praise judiciously. While he is hardly an ardent admirer of the first of the line, he yet recognizes his magnetic personality and immense independence of spirit. As for Field III, Mr. Tebbel clearly prefers his relatively small journalistic empire to those of Hearst, Gannett, McCormick or Patterson. He destroys the legend that Mr. Field is unaware of much that goes on in his domain; but he also points out the many defects of his journals. The book is highly useful both as general history and as journalistic criticism.

THE VON HASSELL DIARIES, 1938-1944, by Ulrich Von Hassell, with an introduction by Allen Welsh Dulles. \$5.00. *Doubleday*. Ulrich Von Hassell was a conservative, anti-Nazi German who served in the diplomatic corps, chiefly as Ambassador to Italy, in the early years of the Nazi régime, but who eventually became disgusted with Hitler. In July 1944 he was executed, along with many others, for participating in the plot against Hitler. His diaries, while they are interesting for the light they throw on the July 1944 plot, are strikingly similar to so many other wartime memoirs of life in the Axis nations: there are the usual anti-Hitler jokes, the expressed disgust at treatment of the Jews, resentment at the Anglo-American "unconditional surrender" formula, the petty gossip about the failings of Ribbentrop and Von Papen, etc. Von Hassell's wife has written an epilogue to the diaries describing the last days of this unhappy conspirator.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

REBUILDING THE WORLD ECONOMY, America's Role in Foreign Trade and Investment, by Norman S. Buchanan and Friedrich A. Lutz, with the Report and Recommendations of the Committee on Foreign Economic Relations. \$3.50. *The Twentieth Century Fund*. This massive volume is at once a gold mine of information on world trade problems and a sustained argument for the point of view incorporated into the Bretton Woods agreements. Briefly, the authors are plumping for a lowering of American tariff barriers, an increase in our imports, the development of a vast network of multilateral trade pacts and an extensive foreign lending program. The authors acknowledge that many of their proposals will be quickly antedated unless the present world trend toward government control of foreign trade is reversed. Like its companion volume, *America's Needs and Resources*, this work will be an indispensable source-book for economists for years to come.

THE CALCULATED RISK, by Hamilton Fish Armstrong. \$1.50. *Macmillan*. The able editor of *Foreign Affairs* here considers the politico-economic state of Europe and the future of the UN. On the first point he states definitely that this is not peacetime, that Russia is now aiming to produce in Europe "planned social and economic disintegration," and that to combat this campaign the United States should quickly adopt the Marshall Plan and perhaps go beyond it. "We cannot afford to be either parsimonious or timid. If our outlay in money and effort is not to be wasted it must be very large and must continue for a long time." Mr. Armstrong sees the ineffectiveness of much of the UN's proceedings as the result of Russia's use of the veto, but he thinks the Charter is broad enough to permit member nations to get around this problem. "Indeed, Article 51 of the Charter expressly reserves to members the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense in the event of armed attack against a member."

EUROPE WITHOUT BAEDEKER, *Sketches Among the Ruins of Italy, Greece and England*, by Edmund Wilson. \$4.00. *Doubleday*. This volume

is a collection of essays dealing with whatever happened to interest Mr. Wilson in his postwar tour of three European countries. It is, in effect, one long digression, but it is nevertheless superb reading. The author can be interesting whether he is discussing the EAM revolution in Greece, Santayana's religion, Alexander Barmine's political life or the operas of Benjamin Britten. Mr. Wilson is, of course, primarily a literary critic, and he is not averse to throwing in long comments on any books he might have been reading during his travels. His material on Greece is pretty much a minority report; Mr. Wilson is one of the few anti-Stalinists that still believe the Greek Revolution was not Communist-directed.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

AMERICA'S DESTINY, by Herman Finer. \$5.00. *Macmillan*. The author of this closely-reasoned book believes that America's destiny is, stated simply, world leadership. It is either that, he thinks, or eventual abject capitulation to the Soviets. Mr. Finer is skeptical of the possibilities of anything resembling a world government developing in time to prevent war, but he believes that the United Nations should be strengthened wherever possible. He feels that the principles of the United Nations will very quickly degenerate into meaningless platitudes unless the Soviet government is compelled, by the threat of force, to live up to them. And only the United States commands the force to exact this compliance. Some occasionally sloppy writing should not diminish the value of Mr. Finer's book, or the force of his argument.

LETTERS FROM GROSVENOR SQUARE, by John Gilbert Winant. \$3.00. *Houghton Mifflin*. The late American ambassador to the Court of St. James here tells quietly and modestly what he saw and did in his post between the time he took office, in February 1941, and Pearl Harbor, almost a year later. While he reveals very little, if anything, that was not known before, and while he is almost uniformly laudatory in his references to the statesmen he had dealings with, he does manage to give the reader an idea of the historic tenseness of the period, of the genuine greatness of such figures as Roosevelt, Churchill,

and Marshall, and of the almost incredible heroism of the hard-pressed British people in the early war years. Mr. Winant writes very pleasantly and reveals himself as a man of integrity, courage and industry. It is now clearer than ever that his tragic death removed one of the most useful public men of our time.

FICTION

THE PEARL, by John Steinbeck. \$2.00. *Viking*. With this short novel Steinbeck returns to the mood of *Tortilla Flat* and *The Red Pony*. For the moment he has abandoned the discussion of "larger issues," and immersed himself, once again, in the delineation of "simple people" in "natural" surroundings. A Mexican peasant finds a huge pearl, which immediately brings him into conflict with the jealousy of his neighbors, one of whom he is driven to kill. He leaves the village with his wife and child, and eventually the "evil" spread by the pearl brings about the death of his child. To rid himself of any more harm from the pearl the peasant throws it back into the sea. Steinbeck elaborates this Mexican folk tale with longish purple passages, on one occasion sinking to a level where he speaks of the pearl's "warm luccence." The book makes tedious reading, and will do nothing to enhance Steinbeck's reputation. There are five full-page drawings by José Clemente Orozco; they are rough but effective and deserved a better text.

THE SURE HAND OF GOD, by Erskine Caldwell. \$2.75. *Duell, Sloan & Pearce*. If this "novel" were signed with any other name, it would not be worth serious attention. It is a shabby tale of a woman of loose morals, who for some 240 pages tries to "make" one man after another, all the time worrying about her daughter, who, of course, shows little resistance to "romance" but who also has so great a love for the movies and comics that she sometimes prefers them to sex. Two of the minor characters are an old goat called Jethro, who almost rapes the daughter, and a sex-hungry woman, Christine, wife of the local minister. Christine, needless to say, runs away with a salesman. The book is

(Continued on page 255)

THE OPEN FORUM



THE CONDITION OF THE ARAB MASSES

SIR: It is not difficult to see what Mr. Ted Berkman aimed at in his article. [See "This Is the Arab" in the November MERCURY.] He was merely following the old precept, "if you throw enough mud some of it will stick."

As an image of the Arab world, his article is, to put it mildly, somewhat distorted. Thus his figures regarding the wages paid to agricultural laborers in Egypt and Iraq are about 25 per cent of the real figures. An income of \$300 a year is very far from being a "fancy income" in the Middle East. And it is certainly not true that "nearly half of Palestine's two and a quarter million acres are owned by a small group of prominent families." Palestine is not a land of large estates. The Johnson-Crosbie report estimated that only 25 per cent of the land belonged to persons owning 100 acres or more, and 100 acres is not much in stony Palestine.

Nor is Mr. Berkman's story, contrasting the ignorance of a Cairene cab driver regarding the Arab League headquarters with the awareness of any Washingtonian of the Capitol, very illuminating. First because Cairo is twice as large as Washington. Secondly because the Arab League is only two years old, the Capitol about 150. Thirdly because the Capitol is the *seat of government* of the U.S.A., whereas the Arab League is by no means a government. Mr. Berkman would have found no difficulty in getting to the Egyptian Parliament. How many cab drivers in Washington would know the whereabouts of the Pan American Union?

Equally disingenuous are his remarks about the Moslem religion. Thus because the *Koran* enjoins persons of means to "set aside 2.5 per cent of their income for charity" Mr. Berkman concludes that "By indirection, the permanent status of the poor is thus confirmed." One might as well say (as many dishonest persons have said) that

Jesus' "The poor ye have always with you" condemns all social reforms or that the social services rendered by the modern state to its poorer subjects imply that poverty is regarded as a permanent institution.

But, as I said, Mr. Berkman's aim is to prove that since the Arab countries have many social problems—no educated Arab denies this—their leaders have no right to speak for them. From which Mr. Berkman deduces that the Jews ought to have Palestine.

The plain fact is that the Arab masses are probably better off than half the human race—they are certainly better off than the other inhabitants of Asia and most of Africa. Yet no one has denied the right of the governments of India, China and the other countries to speak for their people.

And another plain fact is that these same Arab masses rose against foreign imperialism time and again: in Egypt in 1919, in Iraq in 1920, in Syria in 1925 and in Palestine in 1920, 1929 and 1936, which shows that they do have patriotic feelings after all.

There are tens of thousands of Arabs who are at least as aware of their own social problems as is Mr. Berkman. The Arab governments are doing their best to solve these and have accomplished much since they gained their independence. The imposition of an alien, aggressive rule upon them is not calculated to help them do so.

CHARLES ISSAWI
The Arab Office

Washington, D. C.

SIR: Mr. Issawi makes a double argument: that conditions are not really so bad in the Middle East (other areas, he says, are even more wretched); and that anyway the Arab governments are working hard to improve things and

so have not disqualified themselves as spokesmen for freedom and democracy.

On the first score, Mr. Issawi makes a sweeping repudiation of the wage levels cited in my article. He does not indicate the source of his claims. Actually, there exist no up-to-the-minute statistics on Arab incomes, for the very good reason that no one, and least of all the Arab Office, is interested in charting publicly the record of gross exploitation. My own figures are based on personal interrogation as an American correspondent, plus confirmation from the most comprehensive survey yet undertaken of Middle East living conditions: *Palestine: Problem and Promise*, a non-partisan study conducted from 1943-46 by a group of American research experts working under Robert R. Nathan, the economist.

I will not here debate the authenticity of what Mr. Issawi disingenuously describes as popular uprisings against imperialism, as if he had never heard of Franco-British rivalry or the ex-Mufti. Suffice it to say that for the ordinary Arab peasant, the foreigner in his cities is a dim irritant; but the native Pasha on his neck is an immediate and insupportable burden. This truth is being increasingly voiced by the students and young business men around whom a middle class liberal movement is slowly forming in the Arab world, and in whom the real hopes of the region reside.

As to the concern of the Arab governments for the welfare of their masses: Mr. Issawi makes the vague defense that they are "doing their best" and have "accomplished much." He lists no new hospitals founded, no rural schools built, no modern feeding centers for the starving, fly-infested children.

The main thesis of my article — the essential insincerity of those who pretend to be "defending" their helpless millions against a terrible "Zionist invasion" — has, I am afraid, now been radically confirmed beyond the rhetorical powers of either Mr. Issawi or myself. On October 29, a cable to the New York *Times* from Gene Currian in Jerusalem reported that the government of Egypt had made no response to an offer of anti-cholera serum made three weeks before by the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. "Tens of thousands" of units had been offered, along with the services of Jewish doctors. The offer of doctors was "declined with thanks"; the serum proposal received no answer whatever. On the day Mr. Currian's story appeared, Reuters reported that 408 citizens of Egypt had died in the preceding 24 hours alone.

TED BERKMAN

New York City

MR. WYLIE TALKS BACK

SIR: Recently, in these columns, my good name was wantonly aspersed by a Mr. Gallagher, of Lancaster, Pa. In a comic rebuttal of some of the more absurd charges brought against Catholicism, Mr. Gallagher claimed that I am now "spending most of [my] time posting hurt little notes to *Life*."

This is wishful thinking on Mr. Gallagher's part. I am spending most of my time — as usual — defending the right of the individual to believe what he pleases and attacking the perversion of this right by organizations, whether commercial or religious. In this work, Mr. Gallagher should rejoice, for I am one of the very few scientifically trained American writers who believe in, and expound, a common basis for all religions in human psychology.

The now-celebrated letter I wrote to *Life* (attacking the prejudiced attitudes of religion toward science) was not "hurt" — just angry — terribly, terribly angry. Any hurt was his.

Mr. Gallagher says that what he and all Catholics await is "just one — intelligent objection to the Church on the doctrinal level." Well — he's asking for it.

How in the world can an argument on the level of doctrine be conducted with intelligence? To debate doctrine as such, logic must first be discarded. Absolutely, Mr. Gallagher; positively, Msgr. Sheen!

PHILIP WYLIE

Miami Beach, Fla.

SKEPTICISM AND CREDULITY

SIR: I have read "The Skeptics' Corner" for several months with mounting irritation. I suppose that is the purpose of the department, and if so its purpose is achieved, but there are some things about skepticism in general and "The Skeptics' Corner" in particular that ought to be said.

The enemy that the skeptic is shooting at is credulity. This is a bad thing. Nobody should hold beliefs without examination. But for my money the credulous person is a better person than the strictly negative skeptic. The credulous person at least dares to "accentuate the positive" while the skeptic takes coward's refuge in doubt. That a person could earn his living by just digging up flaws in small notions people have held seems the epitome of wasted effort.

But it might be excusable if the skeptic were

as truly scientific as he expects the rest of us to be. Sometimes the evidence he offers to attack an idea is as shallow as that that supports it. A few instances at random will illustrate. To say that "there is no proof to show that any . . . animal . . . has ever reached the age of 114." One would have to search all available death records of all countries, something which I doubt that either Mr. Evans or Dr. Ernest has done. In his attack on Noel Coward and Lowell Thomas he quotes one specific instance to the contrary to the proposition that people about to die see their lives rapidly in retrospect. He proves that one such person didn't, but certainly doesn't disprove the well known medical fact that as the brain begins its dissolution it often recreates the scenes of childhood (as in senility, etc.) and the many attested instances of retrospect in the moments before unconsciousness.

Of course, the irritant to me is the frequency of his gratuitous "smart alec-isms" with regard to faith and morality. He was delighted that his RAF subject felt no desire to pray in the presence of death. It is true that courageous people who have no religious experience seldom are led into the Kingdom via deathbed revelations. But millions will testify that prayer is comforting in the last moments of many whether they are believers or infidels.

Mr. Evans has also established the fact that "Crime *does* pay" in money and power for a time. So what? Are we then to be criminals? Or is it still true that crime doesn't pay what it costs in injury to the personality of the criminal?

I prefer the credulous fighter in the lists of life to the "wise" skeptic who jeers from the safety of the sidelines!

REV. NATHANAEL M. GUPTILL

South Portland, Me.

SIR: In assisting credulity the Reverend Mr. Guptill is but laboring at his vocation. I had not thought of skepticism as cowardly before, but perhaps there's something to it. I suppose it *does* require a certain amount of courage to go among grown men these days professing a belief in celestial geography, post-mortuary incineration, spooks, witches, goblins and dead men with holes in their feet.

Certainly one cannot accuse Mr. Guptill of cowardice. Any person who can jeer at anyone else for seeking "the safety of the sidelines" of life is a bold man.

Mr. Guptill's support of the credulous is no doubt an act of reciprocation.

There are many ways of "accentuating the positive." One is to attack the true negatives of

dishonesty, ignorance and superstition. Another is to refrain from using corny and meaningless clichés.

The "epitome of wasted effort" to me is attempting to sugar-coat the cosmos with lies. Did not even Jehovah rebuke Eliphaz the Temanite?

BERGEN EVANS

Evanston, Ill.

DEFINITION

SIR: Mr. Bergen Evans in "The Skeptics' Corner" of the November AMERICAN MERCURY falls into an inexcusable verbal error that is becoming more and more common every day among us slovenly American Babbitts. I refer to his use of the word "verbal" as the equivalent of the word "oral" in his article, "That written contracts are more binding than verbal contracts."

This slipshodness on Mr. Evans' part inclines me to doubt somewhat his infallibility, and if he slips as badly many more times, I shall, I am afraid, be tempted to disbelieve in his omniscience altogether.

WILLIAM H. RASCHE

Blacksburg, Va.

SIR: Let Mr. Rasche seek not so eagerly to justify his name.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "verbal" (use 4): "Expressed or conveyed by speech instead of writing; stated or delivered by word of mouth; oral."

BERGEN EVANS

Evanston, Ill.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND COOKING

SIR: The December issue of the MERCURY is not, in my opinion, up to your usual standards. I have reference to that interesting feature, "The Skeptics' Corner" by Bergen Evans.

Until recently, I was on the staff of a scientific periodical. We verified all quotations very carefully, and we did all that we could to insure that no reader would misunderstand any statement which appeared in our magazine.

Mr. Evans says that "the *Nation* points out . . . Monsignor Fulton Sheen's charge that transference . . . 'is only used when the patient is a young and very beautiful woman.'" The monsignor is well acquainted with, but does not agree with all, the teachings of psychiatry and psychoanalysis. He believes that "there is a

THE CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT FEUD

...ual for them [the psychiatrists] to learn." The few words of Mr. Evans tend to make the Monsignor's views appear ridiculous, and not the constructive criticism which they are. Many fine psychiatrists are Catholic; Edward A. Strecker is perhaps the best known. Curious readers will find the work of Dom Thomas Verner Moore, Ph.D., M.D., O.S.B., Professor of Psychology, at the Catholic University of America, of interest. "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk," is not included in the twentieth chapter of *Exodus*, as Mr. Evans implies in another item in the same issue. It may be found in *Exodus* 23:19 or 34:26, or *Deuteronomy* 14:21. Mr. Evans and your readers may find rules for kashering (rendering food fit) meat, poultry, eggs found inside of poultry, and suet in the *Jewish Cook Book* by Mildred Grosberg Bellin. The Jewish dietary laws require a great deal more than mere "separate" utensils for meat and milk dishes. I am writing this letter because I sincerely feel that Mr. Evans' failure to elaborate has probably led some of your readers to false conclusions.

Washington, D. C.

SUZANNE T. COOPER

SIR: The injunction not to seethe a kid in his mother's milk is, as I plainly stated, in *Exodus* 34. It is there said to be one of the commandments which God told Moses on Mount Sinai to write down on the two tablets of stone. Yet a reader of Miss Cooper's letter would assume that I had made a mistake. Let any fair-minded person read what I wrote, read the Bible and judge between us.

It would require a special dispensation from compliance with ordinary usage to see Monsignor Sheen's criticism of psychoanalysis as "constructive."

In Miss Cooper's list of fine psychiatrists who are Catholics I miss the name of Dr. Frank J. Curran, formerly chief psychiatrist at St. Vincent's hospital, who resigned his position in protest against the Monsignor's "constructive" remarks and was forthwith forbidden by Cardinal Spellman to practice in any institution of the Archdiocese of New York. (See the New York *Times*, July 21, 1947, p. 8.) The psychiatrists have, indeed, as the Monsignor puts it, "a great deal to learn," but I think he'll teach them in time. I did not say that the separation of utensils for meat and milk dishes constituted the whole of Jewish dietary laws. I merely explained the historical basis of this one peculiarity. The lady doth protest too much.

Baltimore, Ill.

BERGEN EVANS

SIR: The Reverend Alson J. Smith in his article "The Catholic-Protestant Feud" [in the November *AMERICAN MERCURY*] does well to bring to the fore the sad reappearance of bigotry. And sadly his article was slanted, unfair and biased. Mr. Smith did try to give an air of fairness to his article, but like so many Protestants before him he betrayed a lack of knowledge of the things Catholic which he essayed to discuss. Let me point out one glaring mistake: in speaking of Canon Law he makes reference to "Section 1217 of the Canon Law." In the first place there is no "Section 1217" in the code of Canon Law. He took his quotation or citation from the book whose full title is: *The New Canon Law, A Commentary and Summary of the New Code of Canon Law*, by Stanislaus Woywood. This work is NOT the canon law of the Church, but a private work on it. The law which Mr. Smith quoted is Canon 1374.

What Mr. Smith forgot to do was to quote Father Woywood's complete translation of Canon 1374. Says Mr. Smith: "According to Canon Law, such schools are only to be tolerated, where there is no alternative." Says Father Woywood's translation of Canon 1374: "the Bishop of the diocese only has the right, in harmony with the instructions of the Holy See, to decide under what circumstances, and with what safeguards to prevent loss of faith, it may be tolerated that Catholic children may go to such schools."

I cannot but believe that Mr. Smith deliberately suppressed this part of Canon 1374 and gave his own version, which distorts the meaning of the Law, which legislates for Catholic children only. Mr. Smith's omission of this part of the law under discussion deliberately supports the view held by many Protestants that the Catholic Church would destroy the public school system if it could.

I challenge the Rev. Mr. Smith to point out anywhere he can find it in Canon Law, a law which says, in his own words: "such schools are only to be tolerated where there is no alternative." Let's be honest and do battle like gentlemen!

Carey, O.

REV. BENEDICT RUBECK

SIR: My authority on the Canon Law is Professor J. M. O'Neill, prominent Roman Catholic educator and writer who is now teaching at Brooklyn College. I didn't read Woywood's book, and it doesn't seem to me to make much

difference whether the number is 1217 or 1374.

I may be a little obtuse, but it seems to me that the answer to Father Rubeck's "challenge" is in the translation of Canon 1374 which he quotes. Doesn't that say substantially what I said, or should I get my glasses changed again?

The Catholic attitude on schools, separation of church and state, and kindred matters was stated definitively by Pope Leo XIII in the encyclical *Immortale Dei*: "It is not lawful for the state . . . to hold in equal favor different kinds of religion."

And I know very well that the Canon Law legislates for Catholic children only. I also know that it does this only because in the United States we will not let it legislate for anybody else.

ALSON J. SMITH

Stamford, Conn.

SEX AND THE DOUBLE STANDARD

SIR: It was with a great deal of amusement that I read Waverley Root's article, "Sex and the Double Standard," in the October issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY. Mr. Root proudly asserts his outgrowth from adolescent immaturity in much the same manner as other small boys. "See how adult I am," he exclaims. But he proclaims his emotional immaturity with the unflattering comparison of man with the beasts.

He tries to compare our system of romantic love matches with the French marriages, stating that "mindful of his [the Frenchman's] duty to the community, he preserves the family by taking a mistress." I should like to know in what way a mistress preserves a family? Does he mean, too, that the Frenchman takes a new mistress every ten years, since, according to Mr. Root, no woman is capable of keeping a man interested longer than that? or is the time limit implicit in these illicit affairs? Finally, I should like to ask Mr. Root if there is no such thing as infidelity among wives in France?

Never having been there I can speak with no such authority as Mr. Root, but from French literature, plays, and the history of the country, I have always believed that the word lover or its equivalent is not unknown in France, and that assignments must be made by both sexes. The word cuckold is an unpleasant one to most males, especially those who deceive their wives (however discreetly), but I believe it has a French derivation.

Mr. Root might also be interested in knowing (and this information is given with the belief that he is unmarried, as he speaks of other marriages, but never his own) that in America today

a widely used means of birth control, employed by women under directions from physicians, came directly to us from the virtuous, faithful and long-suffering women of France. It has proved most satisfactory and effective.

Ah No, how can Mr. Root compare our divorce rate with that of France, a Catholic country? The Church of Rome long ago set the moral standards of our Christian world. If those standards proved too strict in the countries in Europe of which he speaks, then, as he says, it was easier for the male to set his own standard than for the female to escape censure.

Mr. Root ignores the economic implications of maintaining a mistress. Surely not all Frenchmen can afford one. By the same token, he ignores the large number of faithful and devoted husbands here in America. The divorce rate in America has never been really analyzed to show how many couples are divorced but once, and how many persons are divorced more than once. The figures on the latter group may compare not unfavorably with the number of men with mistresses in France.

Mr. Root supports his belief in the double standard by maintaining that potentially the male is made of sterner stuff than the female, that he is capable of keeping a whole barnyard of hens happy. We women might be able to tell him a different story. What about the men who have exhausted their vitality at an early age? Most men will not admit this to another man, but as Mr. Root grows older and more mature he will begin to suspect the male who is forever boasting of his exploits. Many times words are but the shadow of the deed.

There is still another error in Mr. Root's article. Very few women bear children throughout the entire period of their sexual fertility. What does a man do with his wife between and after children? Does the principle of the barnyard still hold? Too, women as well as men get a feeling of frustration as they see their sexual opportunities end. Granted that fewer of them commit infidelities or seek divorce to marry younger men, should that fact excuse "unfaithfulness"?

There is no substitute for married love. The sexual act between two experienced people over a long period of time can be the most satisfactory and thrilling of experiences, one that can never be duplicated in casual, sub-rosa relations. Real, romantic pleasure on the part of both sexes can be aroused and developed. For the male as well as the female, the desire to belong to another, the feeling of security, is one of the determining factors in a happy, well-adjusted, emotionally mature life.

It takes imagination, courage, and a sincere desire to please to keep both parties interested, but the effort expended is well repaid in happiness, self-respect and most of all, mental well-being.

Wilmington, Del.

PEARL G. HERLIHY

SIR: If you would allow me the exclusive use of the next two or three issues of THE AMERICAN MERCURY, I might be able to run to ground all the hares raised by Mrs. Herlihy. This being impracticable, I will confine myself to a few points which I hope may be swiftly disposed of.

In believing that I am unmarried, the lady errs. I am married. Happily. If I speak only of other marriages, but never my own, in the public prints, it is because I want to stay that way.

I must confess that I do not know the origin of the "widely used means of birth control" referred to by Mrs. Herlihy, nor do I consider it of any particular importance; but I wonder if she does not base her assumption that it comes from France on one of the slang designations used for it. In that case, she might be interested to know that the equivalent French phrase refers it to England or, in particularly elaborate cases, to America, by one of those charming reciprocal international courtesies which caused the French *filer à l'anglaise* to be translated "to take French leave."

All Frenchmen *can* afford mistresses. Expensive ladies are available (as here) for those who can pay for them, but where there is no money, there is no charge.

I do not recall maintaining that a single male is capable of keeping a harem of females "happy." I said he was capable of keeping the reproductive machinery of a number of females completely absorbed. Surely a woman should realize that the two statements are not synonymous. I was referring to the processes of nature and I cannot say that my observations of natural processes have given me any reason for believing that Nature gives a hoot whether we are happy or not. Parenthetically, I would advise Mrs. Herlihy, if she gets involved in this argument again, not to select hens as her symbol. From where I write, I can observe Marcus, my White Leghorn rooster, and the dozen Barred Plymouth Rocks with whom he consorts. Those hens are so happy they've quit laying eggs.

I do wish letter writers would stop calling me "an ardent champion of the double standard" because I have noted that it persists and have

tried to suggest why. Frankly, I really don't know whether I approve or not.

WAVERLEY ROOT

Chelsea, Vt.

SNAKES AND POPULAR MYTHS

SIR: Among the myths cherished in "The American Nature Credo" (AMERICAN MERCURY, December 1947), I mentioned the persistent popular belief that certain snakes inject their venom by using a sting located at the tip of the tail.

An interesting note in this connection has been kindly sent me by Dr. George P. Meade of Gramercy, La., who is an authority on the harmless snakes of Louisiana. Dr. Meade calls attention to the fact that the mud snake (*Farancia abacura*) does have on the end of its tail a hard horn-like terminal scale with which, when excited, it can prod so vigorously as occasionally even to draw blood. The mud snake is not venomous, and its horny tail-tip of course cannot "sting" — i.e., "inflict a smarting injury, as wasps, nettles, etc." — but the people of Louisiana, says Dr. Meade, are popularly persuaded otherwise. They fear the mud snake more than the deadly cottonmouth moccasin.

Dr. Meade also suggests that the peculiar rolling motion of the mud snake is the probable origin of the popular belief in a mythical "hoop-snake."

These illuminations of two nature-myths, from an expert herpetologist, seem well worth bringing to the attention of MERCURY readers.

ALAN DEVOE

Hillsdale, N. Y.

A NOTE ON POETRY MAGAZINE

SIR: In your September 1947 issue you published an article entitled "Illinois" by Mr. Albert Parry. I have no fault to find with the article as a whole; it is even mildly interesting.

But it did seem ill-natured and misinformed of Mr. Parry to speak of *Poetry Magazine* as "a living corpse on Lake Michigan's shores." The term is a rather loose one and might logically apply to almost any one of us. It seems, however, that the intent was unkindly, not to say malicious.

Poetry Magazine now has a circulation about twice as large as it had during the lifetime of Harriet Monroe. Time alone will tell whether the young poets now being published in the current

issues will achieve the lasting fame that some of her older discoveries did.

It seems certain that some will. Karl Shapiro, first published in *Poetry*, is generally recognized throughout the English-speaking world as one of the most interesting young poets. John Frederick Nims seems certain of an important future. Robert Lowell, a frequently published poet, is this year's Pulitzer Prize winner. John Ciardi has attracted the attention of many discriminating readers. I could go on and add many names of young people who are undoubtedly artists of great promise.

T. S. Eliot thinks well enough of *Poetry* to have made a recent contribution of an article on Ezra Pound. Malcolm Cowley contributes both prose and poetry. Dylan Thomas, Wallace Stevens and many others are frequent contributors.

The present board of editors includes George Dillon, a Pulitzer Prize winner, Marion Strobel, a distinguished poet and colleague of Harriet Monroe and John Frederick Nims.

The magazine receives contributions of prose and poetry from every part of the world and has readers in almost every country.

I might say that if the editor of THE AMERICAN MERCURY would consult the publication from time to time it would tend to improve the quality of verse in your magazine. I may say that in every other respect I like your magazine very much and have read it regularly for years — the part of it that is in prose.

I am taking the liberty of enclosing the current number of *Poetry*.

AUGUSTINE BOWE

Chicago, Ill.

SIR: *Poetry* may now have double the circulation it precariously enjoyed in Miss Monroe's time, but still, I say, it is a living corpse. Miss Monroe had her shortcomings, to be sure, but for her time she was a rare pioneer when, essentially a serene woman, she established her stormy magazine with the help of those turbulent geniuses she gathered around her. To name but a few of the giants, Vachel Lindsay and Carl Sandburg were practically discovered by her. Edgar Lee Masters published his *Spoon River Anthology* in *Reedy's Mirror*, true, but soon afterward he was proud to reveal that he had been influenced into writing it by *Poetry's* new style and spirit. The early and good work of Ezra Pound and Robert Frost, of Edna St. Vincent Millay and Amy Lowell, the best of a host of other equally fine poets appeared in the old *Poetry*.

Today's Karl Shapiro and Robert Lowell,

though interesting, do not as yet match the old group's erstwhile fire and depth. John Frederick Nims? His typical work, such as *The Iron Pastoral*, though neat, does not move. John Ciardi? His *Five Poems* are rather representative of his immaturity, and his other poetry occasionally suffers from an intentional obscurity of meaning among other sins of a lesser talent.

And why blow up Malcolm Cowley into *Poetry's* asset?

ALBERT PARRY

Hamilton, N. Y.

NOTE FROM A HOMOSEXUAL

SIR: When I read the several letters in the October 1947 "Open Forum" concerning the taboo subject of homosexuality, I was, to put it mildly, pleasantly shocked. Never before have I read anything like it in a magazine such as yours. Can it be that many people sincerely wish to try to understand the unhappy situation we find ourselves in? I hope this is true, and in order to round out the remarks of your readers, you should print my letter, for I am a homosexual.

I am 20 years old, and am no more effeminate than most fellows. I am the youngest of a family that consists mostly of boys. Before finally accepting the fact that I am what I am, I had the same dreams as other youths — those of eventually raising a family of my own with the girl I loved. I went through the usual stages of puppy love, and even had the opportunity to marry a young girl. I backed out, because I felt that it would not be fair for any woman to have to share her husband's love with another lover — male or female. I despise anyone who would do this, but believe it or not, I know many men who are confirmed "queeries," as one of your contributors called us, and yet they have families of their own. The wives and children are ignorant of the true facts in most cases. None of my friends, and I refer to normal kids who have known me since childhood, suspect me of being a victim of this form of mental derangement, if it actually is that. . . .

I shall have to remain as I am, for no one can help me. But why did Fate choose me, of all the kids in my neighborhood, to go through life bearing the mark of Cain? I was raised in a good family, as the saying goes, and received a good theological training. The Bible condemns me for a sin over which I have no control, which I cannot escape. . . .

ANONYMOUS

Brooklyn, N. Y.

THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from page 247)

dreadfully written, is completely devoid of insight, and sets a new low in dullness even for Caldwell — which is to say, it sets a new low in serious contemporary American literature.

MISCELLANEOUS

GOLDEN MULTITUDES, *The Story of Best Sellers in the United States*, by Frank Luther Mott. \$5.00. Macmillan. Defining a best seller as a book whose sales total one per cent or more "of the total population of continental United States for the decade in which the book was published," Dr. Mott has compiled a list of 324 such titles, and says a great many fascinating and shrewd things about their authors, their rate of growth to wide popularity, the contemporary and later criticism of them, the possible reasons for their achievement of best-sellerdom, etc. He points out that there is no such thing as a best seller public, and that only about 30 per cent of best sellers "fall definitely outside the literary pale." The fact is that a great many best sellers have been great books. Dr. Mott, who is dean of the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, obviously knows his subject thoroughly.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER. An Anthology, edited by Charles R. Joy. \$3.75. Harper-Beacon. Dr. Schweitzer is one of the most remarkable men of our time — musicologist, theologian, linguist, physician, missionary, psychiatrist, traveler, Orientalist, biographer and philosopher. His contributions to every branch of thought he has concerned himself with have been tremendous. His life of Bach, for example, is probably the most authoritative in any language, and his writings on Jesus and St. Paul have wielded great influence in the world of religious thinking. His works, unfortunately, have been largely ignored in this country. This makes the present anthology of excerpts from Dr. Schweitzer's major works all the more valuable. Mr. Joy has done an excellent job, and one hopes his volume will create a demand for the original volumes, many of which, alas, are out of print or untranslated into English.



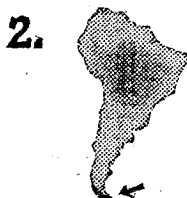
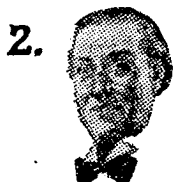
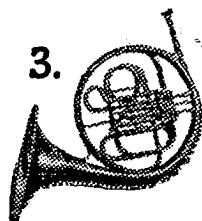
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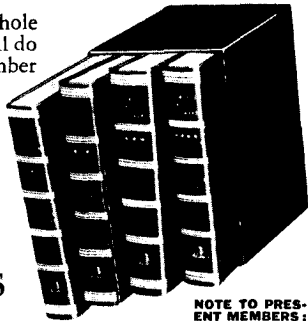
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—Continued from back cover

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